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The New-Century Bible

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Ephesians, Colossians Philemon, & Philippians

INTRODUCTION
AUTHORIZED VERSION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
INDEX AND MAP

EDITED BY
G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D.

NEW YORK: HENRY FROWDE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, AMERICAN BRANCH
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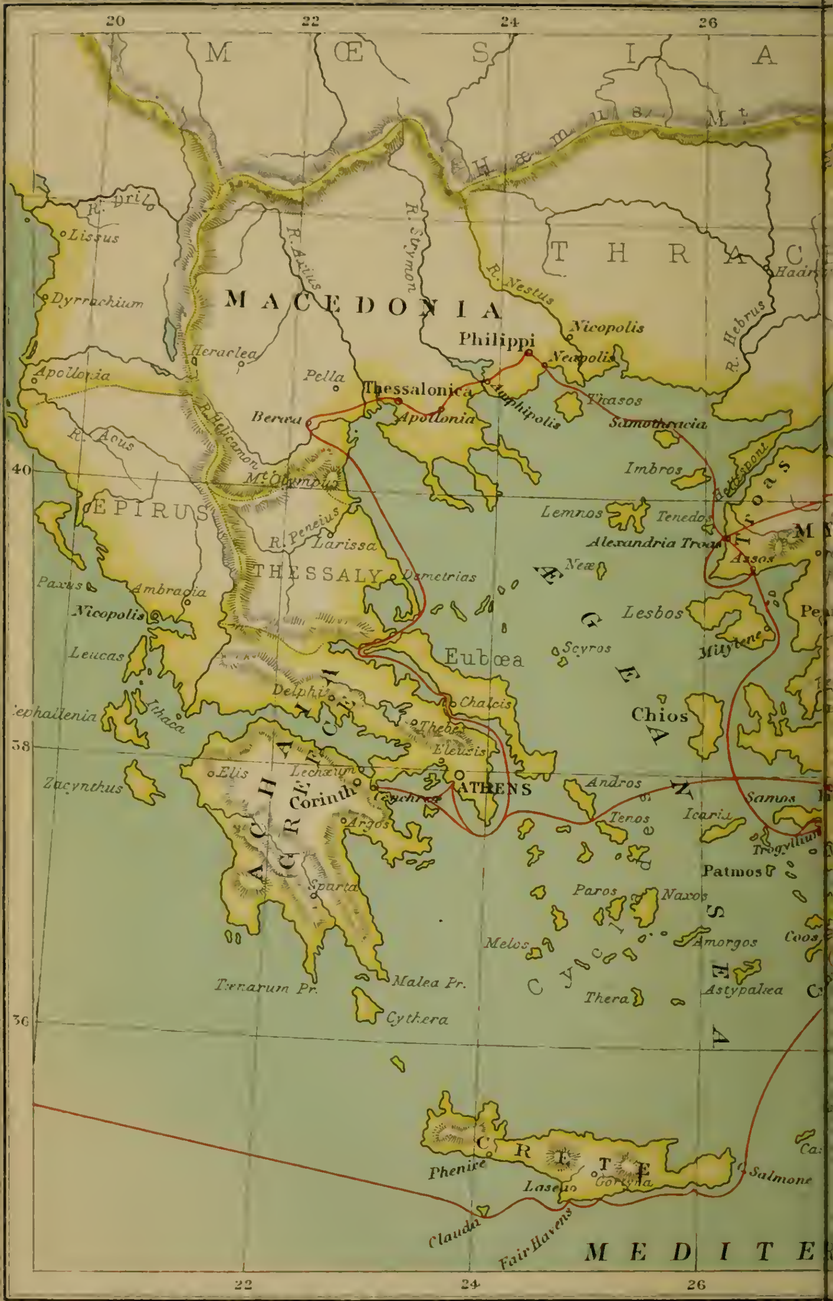
20
22
24
26
MŒSIA
Hæmus Mt.
THRACE
Hadr
R. Drilo
Lissus
Dyrrachium
Apollonia
Heraclea
R. Axius
R. Strymon
R. Nestus
R. Hebrus
MACEDONIA
Philippi
Nicopolis
Neapolis
Pella
Thessalonica
Amphipolis
Apollonia
Berœa
Thasos
Samothracia
R. Aous
R. Haliacmon
Mt. Olympus
Imbros
Hellespont
Troas
40
EPIRUS
Lemnos
Tenedos
Alexandria Troas
Assos
R. Peneius
Larissa
THESSALY
Demetrias
Neæ
Paxus
Ambracia
Nicopolis
Lesbos
Mitylene
Leucas
Eubœa
Scyros
AEGEAN SEA
Delphi
Chalcis
Cephallenia
Ithaca
Thebes
Chios
38
Eleusis
Lechæum
Elis
ACHAIA
GREECE
Zacynthus
Corinth
ATHENS
Andros
Samos
Cenchrea
Argos
Tenos
Icaria
Trogyllium
Patmos
Sparta
Paros
Naxos
Amorgos
Coos
Melos
Cyclades
Astypalæa
Tænarum Pr.
Malea Pr.
Thera
36
Cythera
CRETE
Phenice
Lasea
Gortyna
Salmone
Clauda
Fair Havens
MEDITE
22
24
26

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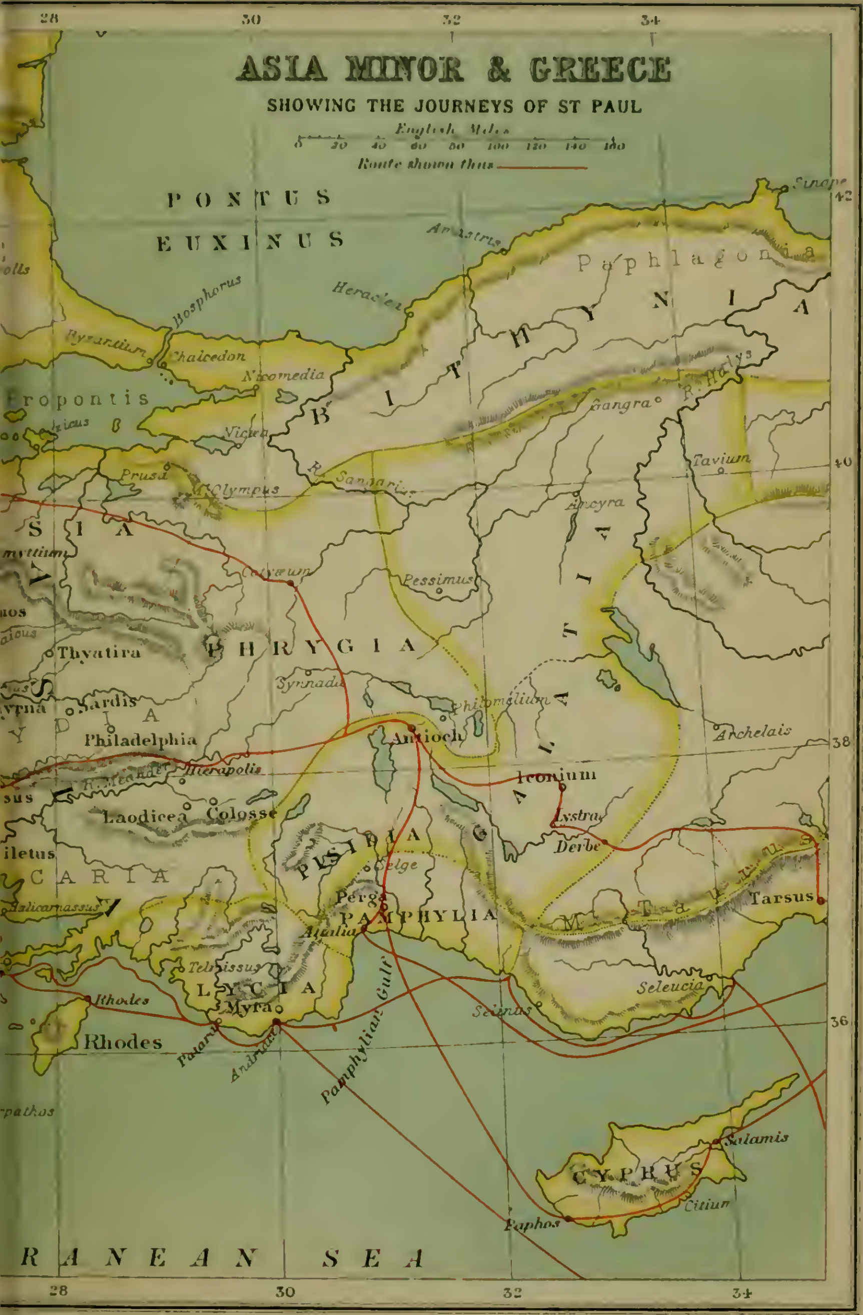

ASIA MINOR & GREECE

SHOWING THE JOURNEYS OF ST PAUL

English Miles
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160
Route shown thus
28
30
32
34
42
40
38
36
PONTUS EUXINUS
Sinope
Amastris
Heraclea
Bosphorus
Byzantium
Chalcedon
Nicomedia
Propontis
Cyzicus
Nicaea
Prusa
Mt Olympus
Paphlagonia
BITHYNIA
R. Halys
Gangra
R. Sangarius
Tavium
Ancyra
ASIA
Adramyttium
Cotyaeum
Pessimus
PHRYGIA
Thyatira
Synnada
Philomelium
Sardis
Smyrna
LYDIA
Philadelphia
GALATIA
Antioch
Archelais
Iconium
R. Meander
Hierapolis
Laodicea
Colosse
Lystra
Derbe
PISIDIA
Miletus
CARIA
Selge
Perga
PAMPHYLIA
Attalia
Tarsus
Halicarnassus
Telmissus
LYCIA
Myra
Rhodes
Rhodes
Patara
Andriaca
Pamphylian Gulf
Seleucia
Selinus
Carpathos
Salamis
CYPRUS
Citium
Paphos
RANEAN SEA
28
30
32
34

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PREFATORY NOTE

GRATITUDE is the word I wish to stand first in this little book—gratitude for the opportunity of studying once more these great letters of the greatest Christian writer, and for the privilege of being allowed the attempt to make them more easily understood by others. Whatever success may attend the effort is due, in the main, to three persons: Prof. S. H. Butcher, who first set me on the right track in all New Testament study; the late Dr. Samuel Newth, by whom all his students were taught careful methods in Greek Testament research, and the Editor of this present series, who in his lectures led one into all that is best in modern methods. For a careful reading of the manuscript of this book, and many valuable hints, I am indebted to my friend, Walter Johnston, Esq., Redhill.

As to the immense debt one owes to books, no enumeration of names could repay it, and all I shall attempt here is to indicate some of those works which, in my judgement, will prove of most value to English readers of these Epistles. As to lives of Paul, there stands first in vividness and picturesqueness the work of Dean Farrar; for careful and painstaking treatment the classic work of Conybeare and Howson; and amongst the smaller ones the palm is easily given to that of Dr. Stalker. For the light thrown on the subject by modern archæological research, and for a delightful picture of the times, Prof. Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen* stands supreme. A valuable contribution is Prof. Findlay's article on 'St. Paul' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible.* Of commentaries on these Epistles the great works of Lightfoot are invaluable, while the most modern are the two volumes in the International Critical series of Messrs. T. & T. Clark. The volumes in the Cambridge Bible, Expositor's Bible, and Bible Class Handbook series are all admirable. The articles in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* on the Epistles herein contained, and on the cities mentioned, are of great importance, while those in Smith's *Bible Dictionary* and in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* may be consulted with profit. Many readers will gain new insight into the letters by reading the translation of the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, or that in Moffatt's *Historical New Testament.* Of books on the thought of Paul the name is legion, but among more modern works, that by Sabatier, the relative portions of Beyschlag's *New Testament Theology*; Adeney's smaller work with the same title; Somerville's *St. Paul's Conception of Christ*; Bruce's *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, and Stevens's *The Pauline Theology* are specially to be commended. Few things are more illuminative than a careful reading of Lightfoot's paraphrases prefixed to each section in his commentaries. On the general questions of Introduction, the best small books are McClymont's *New Testament and its Writers* in A. & C. Black's Guild

Text-books; Marcus Dods's volume in the Theological Educator series, by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton; Bennett & Adeney, *A Biblical Introduction*, and Peake's *Guide to Biblical Study*. Of larger works, the volumes by Weiss, *Introduction to the New Testament*; Godet, *Introduction to the New Testament*; Findlay, *Epistles of the Apostle Paul*, and Hatch's article in *Encyclopædia Britannica* are most worth consulting. For sidelights on the whole subject the various essays in Lightfoot's and Jowett's *Commentaries*; Hort's *Prolegomena to Romans and Ephesians*; Renan's *St. Paul and the Apostles*; Deissmann's *Bible Studies*, and Matheson's *Spiritual Development of St. Paul* should be carefully considered. Personally, I deem one little book of superlative value, F. W. H. Myers's poetic study, *St. Paul*. The other volumes in this series that deal with the rest of the Epistles should all be studied, as a proper knowledge of one can only be obtained through a knowledge of the series. Most markedly in the case of Paul the whole must be known in order to understand a part.

REIGATE,
March 9, 1902.

CONTENTS

PAGE
Editor's Introduction 1
Text of the Authorized Version 43
Text of the Revised Version with Annotations . 75
Appendices 179
Index 189

MAP

Asia Minor and Greece, shewing journeys of St. Paul . . . . *Facing Title*

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS PHILEMON, AND PHILIPPIANS

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE EPISTLE AS A FORM OF LITERATURE.

WITH the exception of personal intimacy, there is probably no better way of knowing a man's real character and inmost ideals than through his letters. Conversation passes away, but letters abide. The most perfect letter-writers are those who most closely approximate to their own style of speech. It is speech crystallized and refined. There is a selective process about a good letter. Many ideas occur to the mind of the writer, but the constraint of written composition and the lack of an answering voice and questioning presence enable him to be more deliberate and often more explicit. The written word may lose somewhat in glow, but it gains in precision. It has not the sparkle of dialogue, but it has more continuity and conviction. The man is not turned aside so often from the thread of his argument, or led off into side issues. He can make clear his own reasoned positions, and pour out his whole soul on some one topic before he turns to another. Letter-writing must have been one of the first uses to which the rudest form of representing thought by marks made on clay or parchment was applied. It is such an obvious convenience to be able to send to a distance messages that are reliable, secret, and fairly permanent, that no sooner was the discovery made by one community than it became rapidly widespread. In the clay tablets of Assyria we have such messages in large number. These clay tablets had their clay envelopes to protect the messages inscribed on them; and the clear-cut cuneiform characters are beautifully preserved to this day, and may be examined by all visitors to the British Museum. Some of these are mere business notes, but others are much more elaborate communications, dealing with family and state affairs of much interest and importance. (Accounts, specimens, and translations of these letters are to be found in the beautiful *Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities*, published by the British Museum Trustees; see especially pp. 56–62, and 153–68.) From ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome we have also heritages of letters of different kinds and of varying degrees of interest, while within the last few years there has been revealed to us a wonderful storehouse of incalculable value in the Greek Papyrus MSS. discovered by the Egyptian Exploration Fund. These date from many centuries, but among them are numerous letters contemporary with the letters of Paul. They are familiar, commonplace notes, but for that very reason the more valuable for purposes of comparison. I quote one that is given in the English translation of Deissmann's *Bible Studies*, p. 23, where there is a most fascinating essay on this whole subject of epistolary literature, which should be studied by every one who has any interest in it. The letter is a note of recommendation that dates from about A. D. 25: 'Theon to his esteemed Tyrannus, many greetings. Herakleides, the bearer of this letter, is my brother. I therefore entreat you with all my power to treat him as your protégé. I have also written to your brother Hermias, asking him to communicate with you about him. You will confer upon me a very great favour if Herakleides gains your notice. Before all else you have my good wishes for unbroken health and prosperity. Good-bye.' We see in this letter the type of the familiar communication between friends at that date, and it enables us to recognize in Paul's letters the regular form of such communications. The strangeness of the form of address and conclusion, to our Western and modern ideas, is revealed as not a peculiarity of biblical or classical literature, but the everyday manner of common courtesy. We are thus more than ever impressed with the extreme naturalness of such a letter as that to Philemon, and it enables us to appreciate how thoroughly Paul brought his Christianity to bear on the events of everyday life, and how it moulded thought, speech, and written word. Thus quietly was the revolution brought about that set the seal of Christ upon the world of literature.

But in addition to these simpler communications there had grown up a much more elaborate form of personal writing, which, frequently in the guise of a personal letter, had a much wider outlook. The writer wrote not for his friend alone, but for the world. Such were many of the letters of Cicero and Pliny. With these we may compare the letters of Paul to the churches. Their design was not merely for the moment, but for all time, and for other audiences than those to whom they were originally addressed. In the case of the Ephesian and Colossian Epistles we know this to have been the case, and we may assume it in the others as well. The church has so regarded them when receiving them into the canon of Scripture, and Paul's contemporaries, as we learn from 2 Pet. iii. 15 [1], considered them to be the heritage of Christendom.

But more careful, formal, and literary still were the class of writings that were only epistolary in form, and written either to imaginary correspondents, or, without any very definite address, thrown into the epistolary mould. In classical literature we find letters of Aristotle, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, certain ethical writings of Plutarch and Seneca of this character, as well as the poetic epistles of Horace and Ovid. In our own day such books as Hamerton's *Intellectual Life*, Rogers' *Greyson Letters*, and Anderson Scott's *Evangelical Doctrine, Bible Truth*, are of this nature. Within the New Testament canon we find similar instances in the Epistles of Hebrews, James, and 1 John.

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[1] See note on the passage in the volume of this series, *The General Epistles.*

Thus we are conscious of a great gain when we turn to a study of Paul's letters. We have Christianity brought near to us by the medium of a warm and affectionate heart. If the discussions are not so formal as they might be in reasoned treatises, they are never lifeless and scholastic.

'In those fallen leaves which keep their green,
The noble letters of the dead,'

the writer speaks out of his own experience to men and women similarly situated with himself, and never forgets their needs, as he speaks of his sources of supply. It is true, therefore, as Deissmann sees, and not only true, but a reason for thankfulness, that 'the exegesis of the letters of Paul must take its special standpoint from the nature of the letter. Its task is to reproduce in detail the Apostle's sayings as they have been investigated in regard to the particular historical occasions of their origin, as phenomena of religious psychology[1].'

But this intensely personal note adds to the difficulties that beset the student as certainly as it enhances the fascination he feels in his research. We see 'the man's life in the letters of the man.' Paul had such an intense temperament that he was not easily restrained by rules of rhetoric or composition. He does not hesitate to coin words. He allows his feelings to run away with him so as to defy all grammatical constructions, and leave sentences unfinished. The thread of his argument may be interrupted by some sudden thought, or at the suggestion of a word he has used, to reappear again like certain rivers, after being lost sight of for a considerable period, or may vanish suddenly as some stream that leaps into a subterranean cavern[1]. 'Broken sentences, ellipses, parentheses, leaps in the argument, allegories, rhetorical figures express in an inimitable way all the moods of an active and cultivated mind, all the affections of a rich and deep soul, and everywhere betray a pen at once keen and yet too slow for the thought. Antitheses, climaxes, exclamations, questions hold the attention rapt, and touching appeals win the heart of the reader[2].'

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[1] *Bible Studies*, p. 57.

The closest parallel to the letters of Paul is to be found in the letters of Ignatius, seven in number, consisting of four written from Smyrna to churches which he had not visited, and of three written from Troas to churches and to Polycarp, who were personally known to him. Letters of a similar character are also found among the early Christian writings attributed to Clement and Polycarp, and also the very beautiful *Epistle to Diognetus*. The *Epistle to Barnabas* is only epistolary in form, and has not the personal note of these other writings[3]. The method of Paul thus continued throughout the early centuries of Christendom, and bequeathed a form to its earliest literature.

THE PERIOD OF PAUL'S LIFE COVERED BY THE EPISTLES TO THE EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS, TO PHILEMON AND TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

The 'Epistles of the Captivity' is the title generally given to the above group of Paul's letters, and the question arises, To which captivity are they to be assigned—the Apostle's confinement in Cæsarea or that in Rome? He describes himself in these letters as a prisoner (see Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1, vi. 20; Col. iv. 18; Philem. 10, 13; Phil. i. 7, 13), but as one who had a good deal of freedom, both in opportunities to preach the gospel, and in intercourse with friends. This agrees better with the account given in Acts of the Roman imprisonment than with that at Cæsarea, for we are told (Acts xxviii. 30) that 'Paul abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.' While it is possible that the phrase 'in the whole Prætorium' (Phil. i. 13 marg.) might refer to the palace of Herod at Cæsarea, it is most likely that it denotes either the whole Pretorian guard of the imperial city, or the court of justice before which the Apostle appeared (see note on the verse). Again, it has been argued that Cæsarea was nearer to a runaway slave from Asia Minor. That is true, but Rome was a much more likely place of refuge. The works of Juvenal and of the Latin comedians make us familiar with the city as the great haunt of all escaped criminals and fugitives from justice. Its crowded alleys offered the best hiding-place in the world. Many references in the letters suggest Rome very clearly. There is an important and active Christian church, with which the Apostle is in contact (Phil. i. 14–17). He is in the midst of a busy life, preaching (Eph. vi. 19, 20; Phil. i. 12), receiving visitors (Phil. iv. 18), dispatching messengers (Eph. vi. 21; Col. iv. 7–9; Philem. 17; Phil. ii. 19–30), and entertaining friends (Col. iv. 10–14; Philem. 23, 24; Phil. iv. 21, 22). Professor Ramsay is of opinion that during these years Paul's poverty had somehow changed to comparative affluence. He points out that Felix expected a bribe from him, and no small sum would have satisfied such a man; that the legal expenses in connexion with an appeal to the emperor were heavy; that his hire of private apartments in Rome, and the board of his guard which would be demanded from him, all meant considerable outlay. Nor does he think Paul was likely to use contributions from the churches for such purposes, so that he had probably fallen heir to some private means either through death or through reconciliation with his friends[1]. The point is an interesting one, and Ramsay does not think that the gift sent by the Philippians to the Apostle militates against his view. 'It is plain,' he says[2], 'that he did not actually need the help that they now sent; but his gratitude is as warm and genuine as if he had been in deep need, and he recurs to the former occasions when his real poverty had been aided by them.'

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[1] For instances see below, pp. 87, 92, 95.

[2] Reuss, *History of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament*, § 76. He gives as instances of rhetorical vivacity, e.g. 1 Cor. xiii. 4 ff., Rom. i. 29 ff.; of antitheses, 2 Cor. iv. 7; of climax, 1 Cor. xiii. 1 ff.; of questions, Rom. viii. 31 ff., Gal. iii. 1 ff.; of figures and metaphors (from the Epistles in this volume), Phil. iii. 12, Eph. ii. 19, iv. 13 ff., vi. 11 ff., Col. ii. 14; of overloading with parentheses, Col. i. 9 f., Eph. i. 3 ff., 15 ff.; ii. 1 ff.; iii. 1 ff.

[3] These are best read by the English reader in Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers*, the one volume edition, but are issued cheaply in the Ancient and Modern Library, by Griffith, Farran & Co.

The order of the four letters is not easy to settle. Clearly the three written to churches in the Lycus valley are almost contemporaneous. They are entrusted to the same messenger, they deal with the same problems, they refer to the same persons, and the one letter bears reference to the other, but the difficulty arises with regard to the Philippian letter. Does it precede or follow the others? The majority of writers have placed it first in the group, and at a considerable interval before the others, but several recent scholars have shewn reasons for its being regarded as the latest of the series, and written on the eve of his trial. This view is advocated by Ramsay, Gwynn, Gibb, and others among English scholars, and there is much to favour it. In Phil. ii. 20 we find him speaking of his comparative desertion—there being no one with him, save Timothy, of a sympathetic temper. But the other letters contain greetings from his greatest friends and most trusted followers. Several of these may have been sent on missions to different churches; and surely Luke was absent when the trial reached its final stage, or some mention of it would have been made in Acts[1]. Those who claim an earlier date for Philippians rely largely on internal evidence of its similarity in thought with the Epistles of an earlier date, rather than with the more elaborate discussions on the church and the person of Christ which fill the Ephesians and Colossians. But may not the different circumstances of the churches account for this? Why should we demand that the Apostle should shew the same trend of thought in the Philippian letter as in the others, if there was no need for it? The letter to Philemon, every one agrees, is associated closely with the other two just named, and yet there is no trace in it of the discussions they contain, because its subject-matter does not demand it. Exactly. And Paul was a sufficient master of language to vary his style. As Jülicher says in another connexion, 'Paul was a man; and he had a right to give expression in his letters to his passing moods.' I incline to place the Philippian letter last in this series.

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[1] *St. Paul the Traveller,* p. 310 ff.   [2] ibid., p. 357 ff.

The dates within which they must all have been written, if they were composed in Rome, are A.D. 61–63, according to the most generally accepted chronology, though Harnack would place the Roman imprisonment as early as 57–59.

All the letters that belong to this period of the Apostle's career are marked by a tenderness of personal feeling and a warmth of intimate regard. There is a freedom from the more bitter controversy of an earlier time, and from the need to rebuke vicious excesses. The sterner tone occurs rather through warning than through reproof. There is no more beautiful letter than that to the Philippians, and no profounder or more highly sustained passages than some in the Ephesians and Colossians, while the unique features of the letter to Philemon make it a priceless gem. They are marked, says Professor Findlay, by a 'more uniform tenderness, a richer fragrance of devotion, and a quiet insight that reaches to the depths of the things of life and of God. . . . These are well styled the *afternoon* Epistles, as the writings of the Judaic controversy are the noonday Epistles of Paul[1].'

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[1] See in addition note on Phil. i. 1 as confirmation of a later date.

The Churches of the Lycus Valley.

It has often been pointed out how great a factor in the spread of Christianity were the famous roads that intersected the Roman Empire. These formed the great trade-routes, and so became the natural highways for all travellers. Professor Ramsay has made a fascinating study of Paul's use of them, and every reader of the New Testament is indebted to him for the light he has thrown on the whole subject. One of these great roads, as it neared the western coast of Asia Minor, struck the valley of the Lycus near Apamea, and led thence by Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, down the Mæander valley to Ephesus. The latter city lay really on the short river Cayster, which was suited for navigation. In early days Miletus, at the mouth of the Mæander, was the important seaport; but in later times, owing to the silting up of the mouth of the latter river, and the growing influence of Ephesus, it became the natural terminus to this great trade-route. A low and easily traversed road led from the Lycus valley to the city; and as this route was much shorter than that which followed the windings of the Mæander, it became the popular and dominant one. In modern times the coast-line seems to have altered greatly from its contour in the days of Paul, and the sea has been driven further and further back. Paul's messenger from Miletus to Ephesus probably sailed across the gulf, that there penetrated far eastwards from the seaport, to Priene, whence a land journey of about twenty-five miles would bring him to Ephesus. At that time, therefore, both seaports were important, though for trade purposes the larger city had far outstripped its rival.

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[1] Hastings' *Dictionary*, art. 'Paul the Apostle,' vol. iii. p. 713.

Let us now take this group of cities in the order in which an imaginary traveller from the east would reach them if he followed the trade-route, and learn what connexion each has with Paul and with the growth of early Christianity.

Colossæ lay on the upper reaches of the Lycus, and was situated on high ground that overhung the river. In early days it surpassed its near neighbour, Laodicea, but at a later date its glory waned, as that of the latter city increased. The district was one exposed to exceptional natural forces. In the first place it was extremely volcanic and subject to earthquakes, which on more than one occasion caused great devastation to this particular group of cities. On the other hand, the streams carry down great deposits of lime, which, being left by the receding waters, cover the fields and hillsides, build up curious grottoes, and change in time the whole face of the landscape. But the valley is a very fertile one, and in the days of the Roman Empire the flocks reared there formed the great source of revenue. Their wool was of peculiarly fine texture, and in the case of those round Laodicea of a rich glossy black. The guilds of dyers were numerous and famous, and from Colossæ came a special dye of some distinct purple shade, which was eagerly sought after and commanded a high price. In this city Christianity was introduced, or at least the first Christian church founded, apparently by Epaphras and Timothy during the time of Paul's lengthy residence in Ephesus. The former (Col. iv. 12, 13), an inhabitant of the city, seems to have been its most active missioner, and Timothy (Col. i. 1) no doubt visited it at his request, and had a deep personal interest in the progress of the church.

Laodicea, distant about eleven miles from Colossæ, was founded about the middle of the third century B. C., and named after the queen of Antiochus II. The situation was a very picturesque one, with great towering mountains rising to the south of it. In the days immediately preceding the Christian era a large Jewish community settled in the city, and laws were passed restricting the amount of money sent by them out of the country, so important a factor had they become in its commercial interests. From the references in Col. i. 7 it is supposed that Epaphras, Timothy, and Mark were the first Christian preachers in the city, and tradition speaks of the Apostles Philip and John as being later visitors to its church. The Epistle addressed to the church in the Book of Revelation contains references which have been regarded as throwing light on incidents in the civic life of Laodicea. In A. D. 60 it was destroyed by an earthquake, but refused to avail itself of Imperial aid, a spirit reflected in the boast 'I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing' (Rev. iii. 17). Its famous wool gave rise to a trade of immense importance, and the garments spun from it were much sought after; and owing to this traffic the bankers of the city were a very wealthy and trusted class, to which facts a reference has been founded in the words: 'I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined in the fire (not that of the bankers), and white garments (not those in which you pride yourselves).' Once more, there was obtainable in the neighbourhood a reputed cure for weak eyes, called 'Phrygian Powder,' so that a special point would appear to the readers in the words: 'I counsel thee to buy of me . . . eye-salve to anoint thine eyes that thou mayest see' (Rev. iii. 18). Paul had never visited this city either, but had written a letter to the church there, and his letter to Colossæ was directed to be read in their assembly (see Col. iv. 16 and note).

About six miles north of Laodicea stood Hierapolis. Its name most probably denotes the 'Holy City,' and was most likely derived from the medicinal springs in its neighbourhood, which were looked on as a gift of the gods. There was consequently in this city a great force of heathen superstition, so that it presented a fine sphere of activity for the Christian evangelists, who no doubt began the work there at the same time as in the neighbouring places. It is only once named in the New Testament (Col. iv. 13), and that in connexion with the ministry of Epaphras, who seems to have been most zealous in his efforts in all these communities. 'Well-attested tradition' connects closely with the city the name of Philip the Apostle, and fixes upon it as the place of his burial.

When we reach Ephesus we come to the metropolis of the Roman province of Asia, and one of the chief cities of the Eastern Mediterranean seaboard. It was on the main routes either by sea or land from Rome to the East, and the frequent landing-place of government officials. As has been already stated, it was also a great trade centre, and in addition had an immense religious importance as Warden of the temple of Artemis. For all these reasons there was no more suitable place for Paul to fix upon as the head quarters of an extended missionary enterprise. The first occasion on which we read of Paul's visiting the city is in Acts xviii. 19, where he left behind him Aquila and Priscilla, who, aided by Apollos, carried on the work with great efficiency during his absence. In the nineteenth chapter we read of Paul's return to the city, and the incidents connected with his lengthened stay of about two years. During that time, there can be no doubt, the churches in the Lycus valley were formed, and those others of which the most important are among the seven churches to which the epistles contained in the Book of Revelation are addressed.

Paul during his residence was brought into contact with two great parties in the city—the conservative or religious order, who clung to the temple and all its cult, whose vested interests were knit up with its worship, and whose superstition led them to dread its overthrow; and the progressive or government class, who were much more concerned for the good order and honourable reputation of the city in the eyes of the emperor than they were about any varieties in forms of religion. It was the conflict of these two classes that brought about the dramatic scene described so vividly in the nineteenth chapter of Acts. The temple was the great architectural feature of the city, and some fragments of its magnificent sculptured columns may be seen in the British Museum, from which a little idea of its glory may be gathered. It has been suggested that the splendour of the great building gave rise to Paul's allegory in the third chapter of 1 Corinthians, which was written in Ephesus, and also to the language employed in Ephesians ii. 20–22.

The Apostle's regular teaching in the city must have attracted many hearers, and so an opportunity was given for many in the surrounding districts not only receiving the gospel, but understanding thoroughly its doctrines, thus making them strong and intellectual Christians. Paul seems to have worked at his trade from sunrise till eleven o'clock in the forenoon. At the latter hour public business in the Asiatic cities seems to have ceased, and thus the building known as 'the school of Tyrannus' (Acts xix. 9) would be at liberty. 'Here the Apostle,' as one New Testament MS. informs us, 'was in the habit of lecturing and discussing until four o'clock in the afternoon[1].'

When Paul left Ephesus after the riot, it does not appear that he returned to it again. Timothy seems to have been left in charge of the churches in the district, and Mark, who was known to the Christians of the neighbourhood (Col. iv. 10), was associated with him. At a later date John the Apostle settled in Ephesus, and spent there the beautiful evening of his long life, so that the church of that city was favoured by the presence in its midst of the two greatest personalities of the apostolic group.

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[1] See Ramsay, *Expositor*, 1892, p. 223; and *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 271.

THE

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

To Whom Addressed?

Of all the letters attributed to Paul, this is the only one about which we are in uncertainty as to whether the traditional destination be the correct one. The words (i. 1) 'at Ephesus' do not appear in two of the oldest MSS., while in another of much later date they are marked as an interpolation. Tertullian, arguing in the second century for the fact that the letter was addressed to the church at Ephesus, makes no appeal to the salutation, which was obviously his strong point had he been sure of it; and writers of the fourth century tell us the words are of doubtful authority and are missing in the oldest MSS. known to them, while the verse is frequently interpreted by those writers as if the words were wanting. The title 'to the Ephesians' is present in all MSS. and versions we possess, but Tertullian tells us that another title was known, viz. 'to the Lacedæmonians,' and though we cannot lay much stress on the evidence, it is at least probable that such was its original destination.

It has always been felt to be a difficulty, if this letter was sent only to the church at Ephesus, that Paul should not, in accordance with his custom in other cases, have much more direct and personal references to the affairs of a community to which he was so well known, and should once and again speak of their having 'heard' about his work, and of his having 'heard' about their faith[1]. We are not bound, however, to pass at one leap to the opposite extreme, and because we cannot fix the letter to the church at Ephesus alone, declare it to be a general epistle to all Gentile Christians. Much more likely is it to be a circular letter sent to a small group of churches, and probably to those in the neighbourhood of Ephesus, viz. the churches at the metropolitan city itself, at Colossæ, Hierapolis, and Laodicea, though it may have gone further afield to some of the other churches in the district of Asia. It may thus, somewhat safely, be identified with the letter referred to in Col. iv. 16. If this conclusion is correct, the omission of the words in the salutation as well as their insertion can be satisfactorily accounted for. The destination of each letter would be marked in the copy sent to each particular church; and inasmuch as Ephesus was the most important one, and became growingly so, not only from the position of the city, but from the connexion of the church with Timothy and John, it is easy to conceive how the Ephesian MS. would become the natural prototype of others, and that thus the words inserted in its copy would be generally accepted as the only correct text.

AUTHENTICITY.

Paul's authorship of this Epistle has been considerably questioned by many competent scholars, and even by those who have been ready to acknowledge as his the great majority of the letters attributed to him. The question is not an easy one to settle, and needs somewhat careful examination. We must not say that the occurrence of Paul's name at the outset settles the matter, because it was no uncommon literary method to write under an assumed name, only the onus of proof lies with those who assert it to be assumed. The whole tenor of the letter is purely Pauline. His favourite methods are employed—the thanksgiving, the personal commendations, the basing of moral teaching upon doctrinal truth—the mental and spiritual attitude are all his; but that, of course, might be due to the skilful imitator. While the language is confessedly Pauline in the main, it is asserted that such a phrase as 'his holy apostles' (iii. 5) would not have been used by him. It must be admitted that the expression sounds more like that of a later age; but not only is the text a little uncertain, but the meaning is clearly that of laying stress on the revelation made to them rather than on the peculiarly sacred character of the office. Other words, such as 'ages,' 'dominion,' 'power,' 'authority,' 'fulness,' which became the technical terms of the heresies of a later age, it is easily seen are not so used in this Epistle, and cannot therefore be taken as proofs of its later date, and as emanating from another hand.

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[1] See i. 15, iii. 2, iv. 21.

Another line of argument is that which sees in the Epistle an advance on the ideas of the unquestioned writings of Paul. The doctrine of the church, it is said, is more elaborated. But why not? The real question is: Do we find anything at variance with his earlier teaching? Has not all he has to say about the greatness of the church and its continuity, about its being the body of Christ and the organ of the Holy Spirit, been already implied in Romans and 1 Corinthians? His stress laid upon the advantages accruing to his fellow countrymen has been anticipated in the Epistle to the Romans[1]. As Hort has pointed out, the coincidences (all the more strong that they are undesigned) between the Romans and this Epistle are among the strongest arguments for its being the work of Paul.

Again, we are told that Paul's exaltation of the married life in this Epistle is inconsistent with his attitude in

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[1] For a succinct account of these see Lock's art. on 'Ephesians' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 717.

1 Corinthians. There, however, he is addressing himself to special circumstances, and room may be found for advancing thought in view of a wider experience and a clearer reading of the divine purpose in the history of the church. Paul no doubt sees now more clearly than ever that 'the end is not yet,' and has to fit his teaching more and more to the permanent institutions of Christian society and of the church.

The close relation of this Epistle to the 'Colossians' complicates, while it also simplifies, the problem[1]. The connexion between the two is seen by the most casual reader to be very close, but the differences are no less marked. Any such artificial theory as that of Holtzmann fails from its very ingenuity. He holds that Paul first wrote a short letter to the church at Colossæ—that this was made the basis of the Ephesian letter by some later writer, and that finally our present Colossian letter was compiled from the two former. The most natural explanation is the best. Paul composed the two letters at the same period, dealing in each with the special circumstances and problems that each community presented.

There are two other writings in the New Testament with which this Epistle affords close parallels: the one is the Gospel of John, and the other the First Epistle of Peter. The Fourth Gospel has many points of contact, e. g. in the doctrine of the Word, the Holy Spirit, the feud between light and darkness, the 'fulness' of God in Christ, and notably the prayer of our Lord in the seventeenth chapter, 'where almost every verse offers a parallel[2] to this Epistle.' In the case of 1 Peter the similarities are both close and numerous, but are shewn, as Dr. Hort says, 'more by identities of thought and similarity in the structure of the two Epistles as wholes than by identities of phrase[3].' References will be found in the notes, pointing to the similarities in thought, as they occur. Were we only certain of the dates of these writings, it would greatly aid us in finding an additional argument for the authenticity of this Epistle, but there are no two writings whose date is more of a vexed question than those referred to. It seems to the present writer a certainty that the Epistle to the Ephesians is the earliest of the three, but, as Mr. Lock points out, Paul is very likely to have heard about our Lord's great prayer from the lips of John, and such thoughts must have deeply influenced him when writing upon kindred subjects. If 1 Peter is indeed the work of that Apostle, similar fellowship may readily account for community of ideas.

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[1] See Appendix B, p. 181.

[2] Lock, *ante*, p. 716, where the parallels are worked out.

[3] Hort's *First Epistle of St. Peter*, p. 5.

Before the middle of the second century the Epistle was quite established as part of the sacred Scriptures, and quite half a century earlier traces of it are found in the language of Christian writers. 'It is all but certain,' says Hort, 'that the Epistle was in existence by A. D. 95, quite certain that it was in existence by about fifteen years later, or conceivably a little more [1].'

There is no valid reason, however, against its being earlier than even this, and it has been pointed out that the absence of any reference to the destruction of Jerusalem favours its being written prior to A. D. 70. The condition of the church, the recent calling out of its members from heathenism, the limits of conflict between the Jewish and Gentile elements within it—all tend to favour the earlier date that falls within the first period of Paul's Roman imprisonment.

ITS PURPOSE AND CHARACTERISTICS.

The dominant note of the Epistle may be said to be struck in the recurrent expression, 'in Christ.' It is the vital union with him that secures the richest blessings to the individual Christian and to the church. The words that denote 'fellowship' are frequent and full of significance. Christians are 'quickened with Christ' (ii. 5), 'sit with Christ' (ii. 6), 'are raised with Christ' (ii. 6), are 'fellow-heirs,' 'fellow-members,' 'fellow-partakers' of his promises. On these thoughts are built the system of Christian ethics that the Epistle contains. The life to which Christ's disciples are called is rich and glorious, because he is to live again in them. The body of Christ is to be his church, and this must be a holy and undefiled body, by which his highest nature of love, peace, and purity is to be presented to the world.

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[1] *Prolegomena,* p. 118.

It appears as if the immediate cause of his writing the Epistle was the messages that had reached him about the dangers that beset the churches of Ephesus and its neighbourhood. They were inclined to be down-hearted because of his absence and imprisonment, and there was a tendency to lapse into indifferentism. Hort points out that the emphasis on the 'ye' in chap. iii. 13 is one of encouragement; 'that you in the recesses of provincial Asia, as well as the brethren in Rome, may know how my present trial is advancing the cause of Christ' is the thought in the Apostle's mind. They have to take part in the same conflict as he is called to engage in, so that there is need for their buckling on the spiritual armour and proving themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The Epistle reaches the greatest heights of eloquence; indeed, its language is often so rapt and rhythmic as almost to pass over into that of poetry, so much so that, as one points out, certain passages seem like parts of those songs and hymns in which the members of the church are directed to teach and admonish one another[1]. Coleridge declared this letter to be 'one of the divinest compositions of man,' and in this judgement all who read it carefully will doubtless concur. It is beautiful in expression, but more beautiful in thought, carrying us to the highest pinnacles of Christian speculation with a daring that is matched only by its reverence and humility, and wins our allegiance by its perfect reasonableness. Its language and imagery have passed into the richest treasures of the church, and on them have been founded her finest hymns and most immortal allegories—from the glorious songs of Prudentius and Bernard to 'The Church's one Foundation' of our own day; and the quaint homilies of the Middle Ages, no less than the marvellous works of the Puritan Bunyan, owe their suggestion to the picture of the Christian warrior.

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[1] Von Soden's *Commentary*.

CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

i. 1, 2. Opening salutation and benediction.

i. 3–14. Thanksgiving and enumeration of spiritual gifts obtained in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

i. 15–23. Thanksgiving and prayer for Ephesian church.

ii. 1–10. The effect of Christ in the heart.

ii. 11–22. Christ's opening of God's covenant to the Gentiles.

iii. 1–13. Paul—the missionary to the Gentiles.

iii. 14–19. Paul's prayer for the church's growth in knowledge.

iii. 20. Doxology.

iv. 1–16. The church the body of Christ.

iv. 17–32. The old exchanged for the new.

v. 1–14. *Imitatio Dei.*

v. 15–21. The thankful spirit.

v. 22–33. Husbands and wives.

vi. 1–4. Parents and children.

vi. 5–9. Masters and servants.

vi. 10–17. The Christian armour.

vi. 18–20. Exhortation to prayer.

vi. 21, 22. Commendation of Tychicus.

vi. 23, 24. Closing benediction.

THE
EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Its Authenticity.

The problems connected with the Epistle to the Colossians are so closely knit up with those relating to the Epistle to the Ephesians that much that was said about the latter work applies in this case also. The external witness to the Colossian is quite as strong as that for the Ephesian letter, but not so frequent. This may be owing to its more controversial character, and therefore more partial applicability to the needs of the Catholic church. It was only in the early part of the nineteenth century that its genuineness was called into question, and that mainly on grounds of peculiarity of language and of thought. These are largely answered by the consideration that Paul is dealing with new subjects, and that a traveller's vocabulary is largely coloured by the society in which he moves, and the widening range that fresh circles of society bring to bear upon it. The Epistle is so closely bound up with that to Philemon, that the genuineness of the one almost necessarily carries with it the genuineness of the other. So strongly has this been felt that Baur was compelled to reject both, a result that surely proves the extravagance and unreliability of his methods, for no one who appreciates Paul can question that the letter to Philemon is the work of his hand. Some who refuse to recognize Ephesians as Paul's are yet quite convinced that Colossians is rightly attributed to his authorship.

ITS PURPOSE AND CHARACTERISTICS.

Though the letter has so close a resemblance to that known as the Epistle to the Ephesians, its differences are no less clearly marked. The note of controversy is dominant. The writer has to enter the lists against adversaries, and stimulate his readers for a struggle. He has been informed of pressing dangers that beset the church, and he has not only to warn but to arm its members against the insidious foes of spiritual pride, asceticism, and the advocacy of angels. This mysticism has its affiliation on the one side with Jewish Essenism (a sect whose practices were strictly ascetic, and who lived in separate communities), and on the other with the wild orgiastic religions of Phrygia. That district had long been the home of some of the most extraordinary forms of heathen superstition; and the people seemed imbued with the taste for excitement and mystery, which was partly the outcome of temperament, and partly of centuries of association. The natural phenomena of the district—its sulphur springs, volcanic disturbances, earthquakes, and other features, aided these feelings, and made it the home of such extravagances. The task the writer sets himself is to shew how Christ stands head and source of all nature, as he shews in the Ephesians that he is head and life of the church. There can, therefore, be no other powers of mediation possible, for Christ is the one Mediator, and has control over all the forces of the universe—none of them can work outside the limits of his authority. No discipline of the flesh or long initiation of the intellect could effect a deliverance from evil, but only union with that Christ who had destroyed sin and all its dread entail upon the cross. It might seem, at first, as if the teachers who were pressing their claims upon the Colossians were more profound than those simpler men who had brought them the message of the gospel; but the most triumphant answer was to be found in the first two chapters of this letter, which contain thoughts unsurpassed in all Paul's writings for the depth and penetration of their spiritual wisdom. These Asiatics were lovers of knowledge, and Paul had met them from the outset with the satisfaction of their desires. These *causeries* in the school of Tyrannus had been a special feature of the ministry at Ephesus; and the tone thus set, and the method deliberately adopted, is pursued in these two great Epistles. We find here the best vindication of the Apostle's declared purpose 'to be all things to all men, if by any means he may save some.'

Lightfoot has pointed out[1] how a new application is given here to Paul's favourite plea for the universality of the gospel. This time it is not against racial narrowness that he argues, but against intellectual exclusiveness. These *illuminati* of the first century would fain have made the gospel the cult of the few, but Paul will have none of it. Christ wrought his benefits for the race, and '*every* man is to be presented perfect in Christ Jesus' (Col. i. 28).

The dangerous teaching indicated in this Epistle found one of its most famous representatives in the closing years of the first century in the person of Cerinthus, whom Browning introduces at the close of 'A Death in the Desert.' He was a personal opponent of John at Ephesus, and is said by Irenæus to have been the immediate cause of the Fourth Gospel's being written. Certain enforcements of Jewish customs are attributed to him, like those referred to in Col. ii. 11, 16. The creation of the world he believed to be the work of some inferior power, and not the direct outcome of the Divine energy, and the Mosaic law to be due to a similar angelic ordinance. He further taught that Jesus was a mere man, upon whom at his baptism the Christ descended, and dwelt in him until the crucifixion, when Jesus, the man, suffered, died, and was raised. This return of Christ is asserted by some to have been called by Cerinthus the entrance again 'to his own *pleroma*' (fullness), a technical term of the later heretics.

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[1] *Commentary*, p. 97 ff.

Lightfoot[1] contrasts this letter with that to the Philippians as being less finished and fluent, but, he adds, 'no Epistle is more vigorous in conception or more instinct with meaning.' There is no book of the New Testament that will better repay careful study, and lead those who expend the effort upon it to enter more thoroughly into the 'mind of Christ.'

CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

i. 1, 2. Opening salutation.
i. 3–8. Thanksgiving.
i. 9–23. The glory of Christ.
i. 24–29. Paul's sufferings and service.
ii. 1–5. Paul's solicitude for the churches.
ii. 6–15. Exhortation to loyalty.
ii. 16–19. The shadow and the substance.
ii. 20—iii. 4. Death and life in Christ.
iii. 5–11. Putting on Christ.
iii. 12–17. The garments of holiness.
iii. 18—iv. 1. Practical precepts.
iv. 2–6. Exhortation to prayer.
iv. 7-18. Commendation, salutation and benediction.

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[1] *Commentary*, p. 124.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

THIS wonderful little letter is one of the most beautiful pieces of literature in the world. It is so perfectly natural and genuine, yet the more carefully one reads it the more clear becomes the art of its construction. While its special pleading is done with dignity and Christian courtliness, one almost feels beneath the words the tender throbbing of the writer's heart.

When it is compared with the letter that most nearly approaches it—that of the younger Pliny in similar circumstances—its superiority is at once evident. I quote the letter of the Roman noble in the version given by Lightfoot in his introduction to Philemon[1]. 'Your freedman, with whom you had told me you were vexed, came to me, and throwing himself down before me clung to my feet, as if they had been yours. He was profuse in his tears and his entreaties; he was profuse also in his silence. In short, he convinced me of his penitence. I believe that he is indeed a reformed character, because he feels that he has done wrong. You are angry, I know; and you have reason to be angry, this also I know; but mercy wins the highest praise just when there is the most righteous cause for anger. You loved the man, and, I hope, will continue to love him; meanwhile, it is enough that you should allow yourself to yield to his prayers. You may be angry again, if he deserves it; and in this you will be the more readily pardoned if you yield now. Concede something to his youth, something to his tears, something to your own indulgent disposition. Do not torture him, lest you torture yourself at the same time. For it *is* torture to you when one of your gentle temper is angry. I am afraid lest I should appear not to ask, but to compel, if I should add my prayers to his. Yet I will add them more fully and unreservedly because I scolded the man himself with sharpness and severity: for I threatened him straitly that I would never ask you again. This I said to him, for it was necessary to alarm him; but I do not use the same language to you. For perchance I shall ask again, and shall be successful again; only let my request be such as it becomes me to prefer and you to grant. Farewell.'

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[1] *Colossians and Philemon*, p. 316.

This is noble and fine in feeling, but the rhetorician is plainly visible, and in the balanced periods we miss the loving touch of the Apostle, and are led to agree with Renan's enthusiastic verdict that this Epistle is 'a true little *chef d'œuvre* of the art of letter writing.'

The circumstances that called it into being are easily understood. It reveals to us a charming interior of a Christian home in Colossæ. The master was obviously a man in easy circumstances, for he owned slaves, and could offer a suitable meeting-place for the Christian community under his own roof. The awakening of his spiritual life he owed to the Apostle's ministry, most probably during the time of Paul's residence at Ephesus. He had proved an active assistant in all the mission work that followed. He was a generous-hearted man, and had exercised the grace of hospitality in many cases. His wife, who bore the name of Apphia, which, from the evidence that inscriptions afford, seems to have been a common one in the district, apparently shared her husband's Christian aspirations, and seconded him willingly in his endeavours to further the interests of the church. It is at least a reasonable conjecture that Archippus was their son, and he had evidently thrown himself with still more zeal into the service of the new religion. Paul speaks of his 'ministry' in a very special sense, as evidencing the fact of his holding some official position in the local Christian community. The Apostle had no doubt excellent grounds for calling him a 'fellow-soldier,' and the name from the heart of the old campaigner must have been an immense incentive and source of strength to the younger man. But the letter is chiefly concerned with another member of the household—to wit, a slave. Onesimus (the useful one) was a common name among this class, and is not infrequently introduced by the comic poets as the name of the slave in their plays. Such men were supposed to have no consciences, no rights, no standing. Their misdeeds were, in consequence, frequent, and their punishment, by the strange logic that held them answerable for their faults, though it refused them the privileges of manhood, severe. He had stolen some of his master's property, and then made his escape. There was no more likely asylum for such defaulters than Rome, and this meeting of Paul and Onesimus is in itself a strong argument in favour of the imperial city being the place from which this group of letters was written. We cannot tell how the slave came to find out the prisoner; but once brought into contact with him, he soon entered into a new slavery, and became 'the bond-servant of Jesus Christ.' Paul's warm heart went out towards this man, whose generosity was touched by the Apostle's affection. No conventional barriers warped his judgement. In Christ Jesus there could be neither 'barbarian, Scythian, bondman, nor freeman.' Onesimus becomes a 'brother beloved.' It is no easy task to send him back to his lawful master, for he has not only endeared himself to Paul, but has greatly alleviated his distress. But Christian duty renders his return imperative, and Paul does not shrink from this sacrifice any more than he has done from far greater ones. Tychicus has been chosen as the bearer of the Apostle's messages to the churches in the Lycus valley, and his companion Onesimus is sent back to confess his wrong and make what restitution is in his power. He returns, however, with the best of credentials—an autograph letter from the great missionary; and such a letter! 'Here,' as Luther says, 'we see how Paul layeth himself out for poor Onesimus, and with all his means pleadeth his cause with his master, and so setteth himself as if he were Onesimus, and had himself done wrong to Philemon. Even as Christ did for us with God the Father, thus also doth Paul for Onesimus with Philemon. We are all his Onesimi, to my thinking.'

We have no evidence as to what was the result of the Apostle's noble plea; but there can be no doubt, from our knowledge of the actors in the little drama, that the result was the permanent enrichment of the household of Philemon by the presence within it of one tenfold more valuable as a servant, because he was a fellow member of the church of Christ.

The letter is of unique value because it is the first forecast of that noble Christian literature of emancipation, which has seen its latest and fairest fruits within our own time. Christianity did not violently uproot the social evils amid which it sprang up, but permitted its own new life to permeate the surroundings till it not only ousted the evil but supplanted it by the good. This little letter is the first note in that noble music that has found place in its orchestra for the strains of Chrysostom, Lincoln, Lowell, Longfellow, and Mrs. Beecher Stowe. In this sense Sabatier is right when he says it becomes 'an invaluable document of the Pauline ethics.' It began the work of disintegrating one of the greatest evils of society, and righting one of the most awful wrongs man can inflict upon his brother. Surely, therefore, it reflects the pure radiance of the cross.

CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

1-3. Opening salutation.
4-7. Paul's thanksgiving and prayer for his friend.
8-17. Plea for Onesimus.
18-22. Promise to be Philemon's guarantor.
23-25. Closing salutations and benediction.

THE

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPI AND ITS POLITICAL POSITION.

THE great speeches of the most famous orator of ancient Greece are filled with the shadows of an overwhelming power that threatened to submerge Athens, and subdue the noble republic. The power was that of Macedon; the man who made it terrible was Philip. From that hour the star of Macedonia was in the ascendant, and under Alexander her empire became world-wide. Philip began his reign in B.C. 360, and quickly subdued the turbulent cities that surrounded him; one of these was named Crenides (the 'Little Fountains'), from the number of springs that had their rise in the mountains that overshadowed it. When he had conquered it he imported colonists of his fellow countrymen, and re-named the city after himself—Philippi. It has been thought that this plural form of the name may have arisen from the fact of several small townships being united in the new city, but that is only surmise. The place had become famous for its gold reefs, and the valley was the busy scene of mining operations. This was probably as turbulent and engrossing an occupation as in the present day, for it appears that all other interests were neglected in the wild and feverish hunt for gold. Philip's cupidity was aroused, but he had no sooner gained possession of the place, than he set himself to improve its surroundings, and succeeded by new drainage and other operations in making it more healthy. The gold was of great service to him in his schemes of empire-building. 'The gold of Crenides,' says Heuzey, the French explorer, 'spread itself over Greece, preceding the phalanx like an advance-guard, and opening more gates than the battering-rams and catapults.' After the death of Alexander, Philip's famous son, Macedonia became one of the three-fold divisions of the empire. During the two centuries that followed she was engaged in several struggles with Rome, and these resulted in her becoming a Roman province. One great battle took place on the plain of Philippi, the battle that Shakespeare has made familiar to English readers in the pages of *Julius Cæsar*. When the victory was here secured over the Republican forces the young emperor Octavianus remained some time at Philippi, realized the strategic importance of its situation, and made it (B.C. 42) a military colony, with special privileges. The inhabitants of a colony shared the chief advantages of imperial citizens, and as so many French towns endeavour to become Paris in miniature, so the Roman colonies did their utmost to copy Rome. The magistrates of such a city controlled all its affairs, and were very proud of their position, while they called themselves by the name of 'Prætors,' a technical term which Luke carefully renders by its Greek equivalent in Acts xvi. 20–38.

The very name of the city has long disappeared. A village on the site of the old city retained traces of the proud title, but this also has vanished, and only ruins mark the spot. Among the inscriptions are names that occur in the letters of Paul, and so a slight connexion is preserved between the most famous visitor to the place, and its scattered stones—such names as Crescens, Pudens, and Trophimus shew us what may have been the names of those who were 'first called Christians' in a city of Europe.

PHILIPPI AND PAUL.

In the sixteenth chapter of Acts we have the account of a great crisis in the missionary work of Paul. We read of a vision that came to him at Troas. In this vision he saw a man of Macedonia bidding Paul come over and help the people of that land. Who was the man of Macedonia? Prof. Ramsay thinks he has found an answer[1]. It was not merely any man, as we have generally supposed, easily recognizable as a representative of the country, for there was no peculiarity of dress or appearance to single out natives of that district from those of any other part of Greece. The man must have been one known to Paul, and so he is identified with Luke, who as the writer of the narrative shelters himself modestly under this anonymous description, as does John under the title of 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' The conjecture is an interesting one, and we have no evidence to overthrow it, though there is also lacking much to support it. In company with Luke, Timothy, and Silvanus, Paul set sail from Troas, and landed at Neapolis, the seaport of Philippi. The harbour was commodious and safe and had afforded shelter to the war vessels of Brutus and Cassius in the hour of Rome's great conflict. The journey inland lay along one of the great Roman roads, the *Via Egnatia*, for a distance of eight or ten miles over Mount Pangæus. A beautiful description of the route has been given by Renan: 'Taking this road, which they did not need to leave until reaching Thessalonica, the apostles ascended the paved and cut slope in the rocks which overlook Neapolis, crossed the little chain of mountains which forms the coast, and entered the beautiful plain in the centre of which stands, detached upon a projecting promontory of the mountain, the city of Philippi. Everything indicated habits honest, serious, and amenable.

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[1] Cf. 'St. Luke' in this series, p. 17.

One felt himself to be in a centre analogous to that in which the poetry of Virgil was created. The evergreen plain was favourable for the various culture of vegetables and flowers. Splendid fountains, springing from the foot of the mountain of shining marble which crowned the city, spread, when properly directed, shade and freshness. The thickets of poplars, willows, of fig trees and cherry trees, and wild vines, exhaled the sweetest odours, and scented the brooks which abounded on all sides. Moreover, the meadows, which were overrun or covered with large roses, exhibited troops of heavy white-eyed buffaloes, with enormous horns, their heads just out of the water; whilst the bees and the swarms of black and blue butterflies flitted from flower to flower. Pangæus, with its majestic summits covered with snow till the middle of July, lay stretched out as if it would touch the city across the morass. Beautiful ranges of mountains bounded the horizon on all the other sides, discovering only an opening through which the sky disappeared, and shewing in the clear distance the basin of Strymon.'

Through this lovely country the little company of Christian missionaries made their way—certainly one of the most memorable journeys in the world. It has been often maintained that Paul had no eye for natural beauty[1], a charge that has, in the judgement of the present writer, been much too rashly made, but, in the present instance there can be little doubt that what filled his thoughts more than all the fairness of outward nature were the possibilities that lay in front of him in that city which he was nearing. Was it in silent thought the three approached it, or in eager conversation as to how they could best commend to new hearers the story of the Crucified? It is true that the distinction which is so prominent to our minds between Asia and Europe did not exist for Paul, as each was equally part of the Roman empire, yet the special circumstances that led to this sudden change in his plans must have made a deep impression upon himself and his companions. On entering the city they soon found their co-religionists meeting in a little place of prayer outside its walls. The first converts were women—one in a good social position, who had come to prosecute a commercial calling, not unassociated with those cities to whose churches the other letters contained in this volume are written[1]. Another, by her conversion, affected the gains of her masters, who, trading on the love of magical and occult manifestations always popular in heathen communities, felt aggrieved at this interference with their sources of revenue and, acting as did the men of Ephesus, raised a complaint against the missionaries and had them thrown into prison. From this danger an earthquake delivered them, and brought new converts to the faith. The whole circumstance put terror into the hearts of the proud prætors, and this was intensified when they learned they had committed a wrong against Roman citizens, which brought them into danger of incurring punishment at the hands of the emperor. At their humble request, therefore, the little band went on their way to Thessalonica, though, as some hold, Luke remained behind. If we could be sure that Philippi was his home, this would have a natural enough explanation. How long the visit had lasted we cannot tell, but there are indications that it had not been very short, since a small Christian community (Acts xvi. 40) had grown up, and very strong personal ties of intimacy and affection had been formed. About five years afterwards Paul was in the neighbourhood again, though we have no direct evidence that he visited Philippi. Three months later, on his return from Corinth, the discovery of a Jewish plot against his life prevented his going direct to Syria by sea, and he made a detour through Macedonia. On this occasion (Acts xx. 6) we know that he visited Philippi. Whether he ever saw his favourite church again we cannot be sure, but if we are to trust the evidence of the Pastoral Epistles we may infer that he did, since we learn from 1 Tim. i. 3 that he went again to Macedonia. We have already seen what connexion he had with the Philippian Christians during his residence at Rome (see General Introduction, p. 8).

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[1] On the other side see a very suggestive article by Dr. Grosart, 'St. Paul and the Objective,' in the *Expository Times*, vol. iii. p. 250.

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[1] See p. 12 on the dyeing industries of the Lycus Valley.

THE PHILIPPIAN EPISTLE. ITS GENUINENESS AND INTEGRITY.

Of all Paul's letters to churches this one breathes the most intimate and affectionate spirit. It is irradiated with a warmth of joy and satisfaction that we do not find permeating any of his other messages. There has been no turning away after false teaching, no outbreak of serious laxity, no lapse into heathen immorality or Jewish formalism. Only one slight reference (iv. 2) is made to some internal quarrel between two members of the church. The Philippians are his 'brethren beloved, his joy and crown.' Doubts as to its Pauline authorship seem hardly conceivable, but they have been raised from time to time, though satisfactorily refuted, and it is not necessary here to go into the controversy, for all the prominent authorities of the present day are at one as to its authenticity and genuineness. Another question, more difficult to solve, has been raised as to the integrity of the Epistle. Some hold that the words in the beginning of chap. iii—where, after having written 'Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord,' the Apostle starts afresh and continues for two chapters—point to their beginning a second letter here combined with the first. It has been shewn, however, that the words rendered 'Finally' may also mean, 'As to what remains' (see note on the verse, and cf. 1 Thess. iv. 1), and is a mere connective, introducing what follows.

If there are two letters, the supporters of this theory are not at all agreed as to where to find them, some saying the second begins at iii. 1, and ends at iv. 9 or iv. 20, and others that the first letter closes abruptly at the end of chap. ii. The words 'To write the same things,' &c., have been held to prove a lost letter or letters, on which question see the note on the verse. The free and easy character of the Epistle seems to permit of somewhat loose and informal connexion. It is not a treatise, but the outpouring of the heart of a friend, and in such communications it is not likely that conclusions of such weight can be built upon a word.

ITS PURPOSE.

The main purpose of this letter is clearly that of commendation and encouragement. Here we have Paul in his most free and affectionate mood. He is writing to those who understand, appreciate, and sympathize with him. He shares his inmost thoughts with them. They have been generous in gifts and lavish in love, and he is not afraid to let them see how deeply he is touched. In this church he has very little with which to find fault. An occasional note of warning suffices.

What he seeks to inculcate is the practical application of Christian teaching. They know the gospel, and they have not challenged the Apostle's interpretation of it, so that all he needs to insist upon is the constant effort to allow these great truths to mould their life. The incarnation of Christ is to be a continual incentive to humility; the mystical union with Christ is to issue in complete likeness to him. The personal note abides even in the most doctrinal passages, for the Apostle (as in iii. 8, 14) does not shrink from laying bare the secrets of his own spiritual experience. Nowhere is the living Christ more clearly manifest, and Paul's consciousness of his powerful presence declared. Here too we have Paul himself revealed—his secret and most sacred ambitions, his failures and successes, his desires and temptations, his sacrifices and compensations. This letter brings us into closest contact with that great and noble soul, and as we read it we feel drawn towards the man, whom mere superficial observers deemed 'contemptible,' but whom sympathetic hearts welcomed as the wisest of teachers and the truest of friends.

If we are right in dating it last of this group of letters (see above, p. 9), then the Apostle is just anticipating his trial. On one interpretation of the word 'prætorium' he has already appeared before the imperial court (see Phil. i. 7, note). He clearly estimates the importance of that event, and while it might issue in speedy death and so bring 'gain' to himself, he hopes, for his converts' sake, that another turn will be given to it and that he will see their faces again. Prof. Ramsay points out the important value of the acquittal to the church throughout the Roman world: it was equivalent to a formal decision by the supreme court of the empire that it was permissible to preach Christianity; the issue of the trial, therefore, was really a charter of religious liberty[1]. This, no doubt, that clear mind of Paul also saw, and hence the deep note of triumph and of joy that rings out in every line of the letter.

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[1] *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 308.

CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

i. 1, 2. Opening salutation.
i. 3–11. Thanksgiving and prayer.
i. 12–17. State of the gospel in Rome.
i. 18–26. Paul's own circumstances.
i. 27–30. Plea for consistency.
ii. 1–11. Exhortation to humility like Christ's.
ii. 12–18. Exhortation to shew forth Christ.
ii. 19–24. Probable movements of Paul and Timothy.
ii. 25–30. Mission of Epaphroditus.
iii. 1–3. A warning against false teachers.
iii. 4–14. Paul's Judaism set aside for Christ.
iii. 15–iv. 1. The true conduct of citizens of heaven.
iv. 2, 3. Counsels of reconciliation.
iv. 4–9. Sundry exhortations.
iv. 10–20. Acknowledgement of Philippians' generosity.
iv. 21–23. Closing salutations and benediction.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS
PHILEMON, AND PHILIPPIANS

AUTHORIZED VERSION

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS

Chap. 1

Opening greeting and benediction.

1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to
2 the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

A great act of thanksgiving.

(*a*) The Father's choice.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual
4 blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without
5 blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his
6 will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

(*b*) The spiritual gifts in Christ.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his
8 grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all
9 wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good
10 pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that

Chap. 1

in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might
gather together in one all things in Christ, both
which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even*
in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, 11
being predestinated according to the purpose
of him who worketh all things after the counsel of
his own will: that we should be to the praise of 12
his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye 13
also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth,
the gospel of your salvation:

(*c*) **These gifts secured by the Holy Spirit.**

In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed
with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest 14
of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased
possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Paul's thanksgiving for their faithful witness, and his prayer for their increase in knowledge and spiritual gifts.

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in 15
the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease 16
not to give thanks for you, making mention of you
in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus 17
Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the
spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge ✓
of him: the eyes of your understanding being 18
enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope
of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of
his inheritance in the saints, and what *is* the 19
exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who
believe, according to the working of his mighty
power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised 20
him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right
hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all principality, 21
and power, and might, and dominion, and
every name that is named, not only in this world,
but also in that which is to come: and hath put 22
all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the

Chap. 1

23 head over all *things* to the church, which is his
body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Transformed lives and their goal.

2 And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in
2 trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked
according to the course of this world, according to
the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that
now worketh in the children of disobedience:
3 among whom also we all had our conversation in
times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the
desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by
4 nature the children of wrath, even as others. But
God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love
5 wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead
in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,
6 (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised *us* up
together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly
7 *places* in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he
might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his*
8 kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by
grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of
9 yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: not of works, lest
10 any man should boast. For we are his workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus unto good works,
which God hath before ordained that we should
walk in them.

The share of the Gentiles in the covenant mercies of Israel through Christ's mission and death.

11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past
Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision
by that which is called the Circumcision in
12 the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were
without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth
of Israel, and strangers from the covenants
of promise, having no hope, and without God
13 in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who

Chap. 2

sometimes were far off are made nigh by the
blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath 14
made both one, and hath broken down the middle
wall of partition *between us;* having abolished in 15
his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments
contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of
twain one new man, *so* making peace; and that he 16
might reconcile both unto God in one body by the
cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came 17
and preached peace to you which were afar off, and
to them that were nigh. For through him we both 18
have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now 19
therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners,
but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of 20
the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself
being the chief corner *stone;* in whom all the 21
building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy
temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded 22
together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Paul—the missionary to the Gentiles. His sufferings a seal of his ministry.

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus **3**
Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the 2
dispensation of the grace of God which is given
me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made 3
known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in
few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may under- 4
stand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)
which in other ages was not made known unto the 5
sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy
apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the 6
Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same
body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the
gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according 7

to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by
8 the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who
am less than the least of all saints, is this grace
given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the
9 unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all
men see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery,
which from the beginning of the world hath been
hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
10 to the intent that now unto the principalities and
powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the
11 church the manifold wisdom of God, according to
the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ
12 Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and
13 access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore
I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations
for you, which is your glory.

Paul's prayer for the church's growth in knowledge.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father
15 of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole
16 family in heaven and earth is named, that he
would grant you, according to the riches of his
glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit
17 in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your
hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded
18 in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints
what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and
19 height; and to know the love of Christ, which
passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all
the fulness of God.

An outburst of praise.

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding
abundantly above all that we ask or think, according
21 to the power that worketh in us, unto him *be*
glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout
all ages, world without end. Amen.

Chap. 4

The church the body of Christ.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech 4
you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith
ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with 2
longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; en- 3
deavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the
bond of peace. *There is* one body, and one Spirit, 4
even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and 5,6
Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and
in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace 7
according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, 8
he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.
(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also 9
descended first into the lower parts of the earth?
He that descended is the same also that ascended 10
up far above all heavens, that he might fill all
things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, 11
prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors
and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for 12
the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the
body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the 13
faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,
unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature
of the fulness of Christ: that we *henceforth* be no 14
more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about
with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men,
and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to
deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow 15
up into him in all things, which is the head, *even*
Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined 16
together and compacted by that which every joint
supplieth, according to the effectual working in the

Chap. 4

measure of every part, maketh increase of the
body unto the edifying of itself in love.

'The old order changeth.'

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord,
that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk,
18 in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding
darkened, being alienated from the life of God
through the ignorance that is in them, because of
19 the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling
have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to
20 work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have
21 not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard
him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is
22 in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former
conversation the old man, which is corrupt according
23 to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the
24 spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new
man, which after God is created in righteousness
25 and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying,
speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we
26 are members one of another. Be ye angry, and
sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:
28 neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole
steal no more: but rather let him labour, working
with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he
29 may have to give to him that needeth. Let no
corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth,
but that which is good to the use of edifying, that
30 it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve
not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed
31 unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness,
and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking,
32 be put away from you, with all malice: and
be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving

Chap. 4 one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

'Imitatio Dei.' 5 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10 proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

The art of thankfulness. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as 16 fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the 17 days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but

18 understanding what the will of the Lord *is*. And
be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be
19 filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in
psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and
20 making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving
thanks always for all things unto God and the
21 Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting
yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Husbands, wives, and the church.

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands,
23 as unto the Lord. For the husband is the
head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the
24 church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore
as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the
wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.
25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also
26 loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he
might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of
27 water by the word, that he might present it to
himself a glorious church, not having spot, or
wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be
28 holy and without blemish. So ought men to love
their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth
29 his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet
hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth
30 it, even as the Lord the church: for we are
members of his body, of his flesh, and of his
31 bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father
and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and
32 they two shall be one flesh. This is a great
mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the
33 church. Nevertheless let every one of you in
particular so love his wife even as himself; and
the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

Chap. 6

Parents and children.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for 6
this is right. Honour thy father and mother; 2
which is the first commandment with promise;
that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest 3
live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke 4
not your children to wrath: but bring them up in
the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Masters and servants.

Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* 5
masters according to the flesh, with fear and
trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto
Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but 6
as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God
from the heart; with good will doing service, as to 7
the Lord, and not to men: knowing that what- 8
soever good thing any man doeth, the same shall
he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.
And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, 9
forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master
also is in heaven; neither is there respect of
persons with him.

The Christian armour.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and 10
in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour 11
of God, that ye may be able to stand against
the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not 12
against flesh and blood, but against principalities,
against powers, against the rulers of the darkness
of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high
places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour 13
of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the
evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand 14
therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,
and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
and your feet shod with the preparation of the 15

16 gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the
17 fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Exhortation to prayer.

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all
19 perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known
20 the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Commendation of Tychicus.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all
22 things: whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

Closing benediction.

23 Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
24 Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Written from Rome unto the Ephesians by Tychicus.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

COLOSSIANS

Chap. 1

Opening salutation.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of 1
God, and Timotheus *our* brother, to the saints and 2
faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse:
Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving.

We give thanks to God and the Father of our 3
Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we 4
heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love
which ye have to all the saints, for the hope which 5
is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard
before in the word of the truth of the gospel;
which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; 6
and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you,
since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace
of God in truth: as ye also learned of Epaphras 7
our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful
minister of Christ; who also declared unto us your 8
love in the Spirit.

The glory of Christ.

(*a*) A prayer.

For this cause we also, since the day we heard 9
it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that
ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in
all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye 10

might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,
being fruitful in every good work, and increasing
11 in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all
might, according to his glorious power, unto all
patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

(*b*) Thanksgiving for salvation.

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made
us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the
13 saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power
of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the king-
14 dom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption
through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:
15 who is the image of the invisible God, the first-
16 born of every creature: for by him were all things
created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,
visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or
dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things
17 were created by him, and for him: and he is
before all things, and by him all things consist.

(*c*) Christ's pre-eminence in the church.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who
is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that
19 in all *things* he might have the preeminence. For
it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness
20 dwell; and, having made peace through the blood
of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto
himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in
earth, or things in heaven.

(*d*) Their share in the work.

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and
enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now
22 hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through
death, to present you holy and unblameable and
23 unreproveable in his sight: if ye continue in the
faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away
from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard,

Chap. 1 *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven;

Paul's sufferings and service.

Whereof I Paul am made a minister; who now 24
rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that
which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my
flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:
whereof I am made a minister, according to the 25
dispensation of God which is given to me for you,
to fulfil the word of God; *even* the mystery which 26
hath been hid from ages and from generations, but
now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God 27
would make known what *is* the riches of the glory
of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is
Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, 28
warning every man, and teaching every man in all
wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in
Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according 29
to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Paul's solicitude for the churches.

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I **2**
have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as
many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that 2
their hearts might be comforted, being knit together
in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance
of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the
mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;
in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and 3
knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should 4
beguile you with enticing words. For though I be 5
absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit,
joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness
of your faith in Christ.

Exhortation to loyalty.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the 6
Lord, *so* walk ye in him: rooted and built up in 7

him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been
8 taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Be-
ware lest any man spoil you through philosophy
and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after
the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead
10 bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the
11 head of all principality and power: in whom also
ye are circumcised with the circumcision made
without hands, in putting off the body of the sins
12 of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried
with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with
him through the faith of the operation of God, who
13 hath raised him from the dead. And you, being
dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your
flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having
14 forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the hand-
writing of ordinances that was against us, which
was contrary to us, and took it out of the way,
15 nailing it to his cross; *and* having spoiled princi-
palities and powers, he made a shew of them
openly, triumphing over them in it.

The shadow and the substance.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in
drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new
17 moon, or of the sabbath *days:* which are a shadow
18 of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ. Let
no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary
humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into
those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed
19 up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head,
from which all the body by joints and bands having
nourishment ministered, and knit together, in-
creaseth with the increase of God.

Chap. 2

Death and life in Christ.

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the 20
rudiments of the world, why, as though living in
the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; 21
taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with 22
the using;) after the commandments and doctrines
of men? Which things have indeed a shew of 23
wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the
satisfying of the flesh. If ye then be risen with 3
Christ, seek those things which are above, where
Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your 2
affection on things above, not on things on the
earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with 3
Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall 4
appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Putting on Christ.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon 5
the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate
affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness,
which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath 6
of God cometh on the children of disobedience:
in the which ye also walked some time, when ye 7
lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; 8
anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, 9
seeing that ye have put off the old man with his
deeds; and have put on the new *man*, which is 10
renewed in knowledge after the image of him that
created him: where there is neither Greek nor 11
Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian,
Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and
in all.

The garments of holiness.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and 12
beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness

13 of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave
14 you, so also *do* ye. And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.
15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be
16 ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the
17 Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Practical precepts.

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own hus-
19 bands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.
20 Children, obey *your* parents, in all things: for this
21 is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.
22 Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers;
23 but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord,
24 and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye
25 serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done:
4 and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Exhortation to prayer.

2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with
3 thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God

Chap. 4

would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak
the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:
that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. 4
Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, 5
redeeming the time. Let your speech *be* alway 6
with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know
how ye ought to answer every man.

Commendations, salutation, and benediction.

All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, 7
who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister
and fellowservant in the Lord: whom I have sent 8
unto you for the same purpose, that he might
know your estate, and comfort your hearts; with 9
Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is
one of you. They shall make known unto you all
things which *are done* here. Aristarchus my fellow- 10
prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to
Barnabas, (touching whom ye received command-
ments: if he come unto you, receive him;) and 11
Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the
circumcision. These only *are my* fellowworkers
unto the kingdom of God, which have been a
comfort unto me. Epaphras, who is *one* of you, 12
a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring
fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand
perfect and complete in all the will of God. For 13
I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for
you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them
in Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and 14
Demas, greet you. Salute the brethren which are 15
in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which
is in his house. And when this epistle is read 16
among you, cause that it be read also in the church
of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the

17 *epistle* from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received
18 in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

Written from Rome to the Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

PHILEMON

Opening salutation.

PAUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy 1
our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved,
and fellowlabourer, and to *our* beloved Apphia, 2
and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church
in thy house: Grace to you, and peace, from God 3
our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul's thanksgiving and prayer for his friend.

I thank my God, making mention of thee always 4
in my prayers, hearing of thy love and faith, which 5
thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all
saints; that the communication of thy faith may 6
become effectual by the acknowledging of every
good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For 7
we have great joy and consolation in thy love,
because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by
thee, brother.

Plea for Onesimus.

Wherefore, though I might be much bold in 8
Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet 9
for love's sake I rather beseech *thee*, being such an
one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of
Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, 10
whom I have begotten in my bonds: which in time 11
past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to
thee and to me: whom I have sent again: thou 12

therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:
13 whom I would have retained with me, that in thy
stead he might have ministered unto me in the
14 bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind would
I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as
15 it were of necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he
therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest
16 receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but
above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me,
but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh,
17 and in the Lord? If thou count me therefore a
partner, receive him as myself.

Promise to be Philemon's guarantor.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* ought,
19 put that on mine account; I Paul have written *it*
with mine own hand, I will repay *it*: albeit I do
not say to thee how thou owest unto me even
20 thine own self besides. Yea, brother, let me have
joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in
21 the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience
I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also
22 do more than I say. But withal prepare me also
a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I
shall be given unto you.

Closing salutation and benediction.

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner
24 in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas,
25 Lucas, my fellowlabourers. The grace of our Lord
Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

PHILIPPIANS

Chap. 1

Opening salutation.

PAUL and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus 1
Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are
at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace 2
be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and
from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and prayer.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of 3
you, always in every prayer of mine for you all 4
making request with joy, for your fellowship in the 5
gospel from the first day until now; being confident 6
of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good
work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus
Christ: even as it is meet for me to think this of 7
you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch
as both in my bonds, and in the defence and
confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of
my grace. For God is my record, how greatly I 8
long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.
And this I pray, that your love may abound yet 9
more and more in knowledge and *in* all judgment;
that ye may approve things that are excellent; that 10
ye may be sincere and without offence till the day
of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteous- 11

ness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

State of the gospel in Rome.

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen
13 out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the
14 palace, and in all other *places;* and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word
15 without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of
16 envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely,
17 supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

Paul's own circumstances.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I
19 therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus
20 Christ, according to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life,
21 or by death. For to me to live *is* Christ, and to
22 die *is* gain. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot
23 not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is
24 far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is*
25 more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you
26 all for your furtherance and joy of faith; that your

Chap. 1

rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ
for me by my coming to you again.

Plea for consistency.

Only let your conversation be as it becometh 27
the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see
you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs,
that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind
striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in 28
nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to
them an evident token of perdition, but to you of
salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is 29
given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe
on him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the 30
same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to
be* in me.

Exhortation to humility like Christ's.

If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if **2**
any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit,
if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye 2
be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one
accord, of one mind. *Let* nothing *be done* through 3
strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let
each esteem other better than themselves. Look 4
not every man on his own things, but every man
also on the things of others. Let this mind be in 5
you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in 6
the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal
with God: but made himself of no reputation, and 7
took upon him the form of a servant, and was made
in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion 8
as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient
unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore 9
God also hath highly exalted him, and given him
a name which is above every name: that at the 10
name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things*

in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the
11 earth; and *that* every tongue should confess that
Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the
Father.

Exhortation to shew forth Christ.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always
obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now
much more in my absence, work out your own
13 salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God
which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his*
14 good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings
15 and disputings: that ye may be blameless and
harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the
midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among
16 whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding
forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the
day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither
17 laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon
the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and
18 rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do
ye joy, and rejoice with me.

Probable movements of Paul and Timothy.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus
shortly unto you, that I also may be of good
20 comfort, when I know your state. For I have no
man likeminded, who will naturally care for your
21 state. For all seek their own, not the things which
22 are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him,
that, as a son with the father, he hath served with
23 me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send
presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with
24 me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself
shall come shortly.

Mission of Epaphroditus.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you
Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in

Chap. 2

labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and
he that ministered to my wants. For he longed 26
after you all, and was full of heaviness, because
that ye had heard that he had been sick. For 27
indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God
had mercy on him; and not on him only, but
on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.
I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, 28
when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I
may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore 29
in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in
reputation: because for the work of Christ he was 30
nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply
your lack of service toward me. Finally, my **3**
brethren, rejoice in the Lord.

A warning against false teachers.

To write the same things to you, to me indeed
is not grievous, but for you *it is* safe. Beware of 2
dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.
For we are the circumcision, which worship 3
God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and
have no confidence in the flesh.

Paul's Judaism set aside for Christ.

Though I might also have confidence in the 4
flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath
whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:
circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, 5
of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the
Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; con- 6
cerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the
righteousness which is in the law, blameless.
But what things were gain to me, those I counted 7
loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all 8
things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge
of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have

suffered the loss of all things, and do count them
9 *but* dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in
him, not having mine own righteousness, which is
of the law, but that which is through the faith of
Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:
10 that I may know him, and the power of his
resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,
11 being made conformable unto his death; if by any
means I might attain unto the resurrection of the
12 dead. Not as though I had already attained,
either were already perfect: but I follow after, if
that I may apprehend that for which also I am
13 apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count
not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one
thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are
behind, and reaching forth unto those things
14 which are before, I press toward the mark for the
prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The true conduct of citizens of heaven.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus
minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise
minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.
16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained,
let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same
17 thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and
mark them which walk so as ye have us for an
18 ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told
you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that*
19 *they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose
end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and
whose glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly
20 things.) For our conversation is in heaven; from
whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord
21 Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that

Chap. 3

it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Therefore, my 4
brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

Counsels of reconciliation.

I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that 2
they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I 3
intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the book of life.

Sundry exhortations.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, 4
Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto 5
all men. The Lord *is* at hand. Be careful for 6
nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made
known unto God. And the peace of God, which 7
passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts
and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, 8
whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on
these things. Those things, which ye have both 9
learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Acknowledgement of Philippians' generosity.

But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at 10
the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked oppor-
tunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I 11
have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith*

Chap. 4

12 to be content. I know both how to be abased,
and I know how to abound: every where and in
all things I am instructed both to be full and to be
13 hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can
do all things through Christ which strengtheneth
14 me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that
15 ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye
Philippians know also, that in the beginning of
the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no
church communicated with me as concerning
16 giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in
Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my
17 necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I
18 desire fruit that may abound to your account. But
I have all, and abound: I am full, having received
of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from
you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice accept-
19 able, wellpleasing to God. But my God shall
supply all your need according to his riches in
20 glory by Christ Jesus. Now unto God and our
Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Closing salutations and benedictions.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren
22 which are with me greet you. All the saints salute
you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's house-
23 hold. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with
you all. Amen.

It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus.

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS PHILEMON, AND PHILIPPIANS

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS

PAUL, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of 1
God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful

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i. 1, 2. *Opening greeting and benediction.*

[On the general form of a Greek letter see the Introduction, p. 4.]

It is interesting and instructive carefully to compare the greetings of Paul's various Epistles. They may be classified as follows:—

(1) Those that vindicate his apostleship, and define the scope of the gospel message, viz. Rom. i. 1–7, the most elaborate of all, on which see note in Mr. Garvie's volume in this series, as also the corresponding notes on the other Epistles.

Gal. i. 1–5, which foreshadows the central positions of the argument, and may be termed the most polemical.

2 Tim. i. 1, 2, which in its expression 'the promise of life' sets the note of glad anticipation that recurs throughout the letter.

Titus i. 1–4, which lays stress upon the inward authority of his apostolic office as a teacher, and so gives the best vindication of the counsels that follow.

(2) Those that mention his apostleship and give a definite characterization of his correspondents, viz. 1 Cor. i. 1–3; 2 Cor. i. 1, 2; Eph. i, 1, 2; Col. i. 1, 2; 1 Tim. i. 1, 2. (On the contrast in style between this salutation and that of 2 Timothy see notes on the respective Epistles.)

(3) Those that are without any mention of his apostleship, viz. Phil. i. 1, 2; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1, 2; Philem. 1–3.

It is to be noted that only in this Epistle and in that to the Romans does Paul's name stand alone in the opening greeting. For the omission of the words 'at Ephesus' see Introduction, p. 17.

to the saints . . . and the faithful: probably these are not two classes, but one—'faithful saints,' 'worthy believers.' Cf. Col. i. 1, 'the saints and faithful brethren.'

2 in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

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i. 3–18. A GREAT ACT OF THANKSGIVING.

(*a*) 3–6. *The Father's deliberate choice of sons in Christ.*

(*b*) 7–13[a]. *The spiritual gifts that follow, all summed up in Christ.*

(*c*) 13[b], 14. *These gifts secured by the pledge of the Holy Spirit.*

As is customary in Paul's Epistles a thanksgiving follows the introductory sentences. In this instance it is long, complicated, and elaborate. Lightfoot considers that it here 'takes a more general form, corresponding to the character and destination of the letter,' as intended for a number of churches. Its use of the word 'bless' in place of 'give thanks' is also remarkable. Only one parallel case exists, that, namely, of 2 Cor. i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' &c. The general sense of the whole passage is as follows. Man's deepest and truest thanks are due to God the Father, who in His Son Jesus Christ has shared with men the gifts of heaven. From all eternity He has seen in the perfect and holy Son the ideal of humanity, and destined men for that same glorious sonship, of which in the freedom of His love He has purposed they should be partakers. Through the gift of His Son to the world He has made sonship possible, not only by redemption and forgiveness, but by enduing the renewed nature of men with the wisdom and prudence—the power to grasp the mysteries of the Divine secrets, which Christ alone held in his own right, but has graciously given men, through their becoming partakers in his own nature. This privilege is the lot of all, without exception, who trust in Christ. This also the readers of the Epistle know by experience, and have an additional testimony to the fact in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who assures them of the perfecting of the work of God begun in them.

The whole passage is of immense importance as containing a clear statement of Paul's doctrine of God's choice of men in Christ 'before the foundation of the world'; in a word, of the doctrine of Predestination. It enables us to see how grand a foundation it gives to the superstructure of the Pauline gospel, and that, far from lowering the conception of human nature and freedom, it exalts it infinitely beyond what any other conception could effect. Christ, the Ideal Man, makes ideal manhood after God's pattern—efficient for every one who will exert his power of choice along the lines of the Divine purpose. The philosophy

Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ: even as he chose us in 4

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has been grasped and tersely expressed in the familiar couplet of *In Memoriam*:—

> 'Our wills are ours, we know not how;
> Our wills are ours, to make them thine[1].'

But Paul believes he knows how our wills are ours—they are the gift of the Divine Will. Thus Kant's great saying is vindicated, 'Nothing can be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a Good Will[2].'

3. the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this form of expression cf. Rom. xv. 6; 2 Cor. i. 3, &c. It seems to have distinct reference to our Lord's frequent teaching that God is our Father *through* him (cf. John xx. 17, xvii. 21; Matt. xi. 25-27). We here note the first of numerous resemblances to the language and idea of the First Epistle of Peter which this Epistle presents; cf. 1 Pet. i. 2, and also the notes on verse 4, ii. 2, iii. 10, v. 1, vi. 7. The connexion is shewn more, says Dr. Hort, 'by identities of thought and similarity in the structure of the two Epistles as wholes than by identities of phrase,' and again, 'The true key to not a few difficult passages of St. Peter is to be found in tracing back the thought to its origin in one or both of these two Epistles [Romans and Ephesians] of St. Paul. This importance of theirs, it cannot be too often repeated, is not accidental. They are precisely the two most comprehensive and fundamental of all St. Paul's Epistles, and they are connected much more closely together in their drift than appears on the surface[3].' For a further discussion of the subject Hort's *Prolegomena* is worthy of careful study.

The most recent writer on the subject (Dr. C. Bigg in the *International Commentary* on the *Epistles of Peter*) thinks that the significance of these similarities in language has been exaggerated. In Ephesians, he says, we have the language of a 'mystic,' while in 1 Peter we have the thoughts of a 'practical pastor.'

in the heavenly places: *lit.* 'in the heavenlies': cf. verse 20, ii. 6, iii. 10, vi. 12. The phrase occurs five times in this Epistle, and not elsewhere. It appears to designate the spiritual atmosphere of the Christian life, as when we are told in Phil. iii. 20 that 'our citizenship is in heaven.' 'It is the heaven,' says Lightfoot,

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[1] *loc. cit.*, Introduction.

[2] *Kant's Theory of Ethics* (Abbott), p. 9.

[3] Hort, 1 *Epistle of Peter*, p. 5.

him before the foundation of the world, that we should
5 be holy and without blemish before him in love: having
foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus

'which lies within and about the true Christian[1].' Cf. Col. i. 13, and iii. 1. One may illustrate the idea from the allegorical as apart from the literal interpretation of Dante's *Paradiso.* The visions of the poet are not so much descriptions of the life of the glorified as they are guides for the life we have now to live on earth. This value also attaches to the visions of the Apocalypse, and gives that book its abiding spiritual significance. Otherwise its value would have been limited to the age in which it was written. Now it is a book for all time.

in Christ. The words 'in Christ' may be said to be the keynote of the whole Epistle. 'In him, by him, through him' are all things. This great doctrine of the mystical union with Christ finds in this Epistle its clearest enunciation and most perfect illustration. All Christ's teaching about 'abiding in him' finds its perfect commentary in the pages of this Epistle.

4. before the foundation of the world: i. e. from all eternity. Cf. John xvii. 24, 'thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.' (The parallels in this Epistle with the Johannine type of teaching are extremely interesting, and go far to modify the elements of contrast that have so frequently been dwelt upon in the doctrine of the two apostles. Again, it is not in identity of phrase, but in similarity of thought, that the resemblance is to be sought.) Cf. 1 Pet. i. 20, 'who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world.' The phrase is not to be found elsewhere in Paul's writings.

holy and without blemish: the metaphor is that of sacrifice: cf. v. 27; Col. i. 22. 'The words give,' says Abbott, 'the positive and negative sides of the idea.' Cf. Phil. ii. 15, and Titus ii. 14.

before him in love. There is about equal authority for the punctuation given in the text and that of the margin ('him: having in love foreordained us'). To the latter collocation of words the Greek commentators and the majority of recent interpreters lean.

5. foreordained. The word so translated appears to have been a creation of Paul's, from whose writings it passed rapidly into the Christian vocabulary.

adoption. The figure is taken from the Roman law, in which adoption was a matter of daily occurrence, and provided for by elaborate ceremony (see *Expository Times*, vol. iii. p. 3, and article on 'St. Paul and the Roman Law' in *Contemporary Review*

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[1] *Notes on Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 312.

Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of
his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he 6
freely bestowed on us in the Beloved: in whom we have 7
our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our

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for August, 1891). The 'adopted' son was actually a member of the family into which he entered—its limitations as well as privileges being his. But while the metaphor is legal there is no need to assume that Paul's conception of the spiritual relation is legal, still less fictitious. All men are God's children, but some word is needed to express the conscious sonship of faith and obedience, and this is Paul's expression. Cf. Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5, and notes on these passages.

good pleasure. The word so translated is, according to Jerome, a coinage of the Greek translators of the O. T., who were compelled, as he says, 'to form new words to be vehicles of new ideas.' The word may also mean 'good will,' but usage points to the rendering of the text as the correct one here.

6. to the praise of the glory of his grace. This is an idea which fills the Apostle's mind, and to which he time and again returns. Grace is not some mysterious spiritual entity of theologians, but the free gift of God's love. 'Herein lies the magnificence, the glory, of God's work of redemption, that it has not the character of a contract, but of a largess' (Lightfoot). In verse 7 the Apostle speaks of 'the riches of his grace,' in verse 12 of 'the praise of his glory,' and in ii. 7 with yet greater force of 'the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness.' Cf. also Col. i. 27, where we read of 'the riches of the glory of this mystery.'

which he freely bestowed. The reading in the text is that of the best MSS., whereas that of the margin ('wherewith he endued us') is probably an attempted simplification of the other.

the Beloved. This is the only occurrence of this name for Christ in the writings of the N. T., though the title is not uncommon in the literature that immediately succeeds it. Cf. Col. i. 13, 'the Son of his love.'

7. redemption. 'Release' is the basal idea of the word so translated—release from sin and all that sin entails. The special character of release suggested by the word is that from slavery. Men are regarded as captives under an evil tyrant, and their deliverance must be accomplished by a mightier hand. See Rom. viii. 23 and note. It is difficult, if not impossible, to force the meaning 'payment of a ransom price' into many usages of the word, nor is it at all necessary to do so.

through his blood. The life of Christ offered up for and shared with those who believe in him is the efficient means of

8 trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he
made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,
9 having made known unto us the mystery of his will,
according to his good pleasure which he purposed in
10 him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to

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their redemption. These words do not occur in the best text of the parallel passage, Col. i. 14.

the forgiveness of our trespasses. The question has been raised why this additional definition of redemption should be given. Lightfoot suggests that it was in answer to some false teaching prevalent in the churches to which the letter was sent, particularly at Colossæ. Is it necessary to suppose this? Surely it is in Paul's manner that he should dwell upon the great 'riches of God's grace,' and delight in enumerating and amplifying their fullness.

riches of his grace. 'Riches' is a favourite word of the Apostle Paul. Paley calls it one of his 'cant' words. Rather should we describe it as one of the richly tinted windows through which he admits the Divine light into the Christian temple.

8. which he made to abound. This is the best rendering. An attempt to simplify, similar to that in verse 6, accounts for the reading of the A. V. and margin, 'wherewith he abounded.'

wisdom and prudence. If a distinction is sought in these gifts bestowed upon us by God, wisdom is to be understood of the reason, and prudence of the understanding.

9. mystery. The meaning of the word is that of 'something once hidden, but now revealed.' It is always used in the N. T. in the sense of an 'open secret,' save in the Book of Revelation, where the sense of a hidden secret remains, e. g. 'the mystery of the seven stars' (i. 20). Chrysostom defines the word well, 'A mystery,' he says, 'is that which is everywhere proclaimed, but which is not understood by those who have not right judgement.'

10. For the general idea of this verse cf. the opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The word rendered **dispensation** is really our word 'economy,' and is frequently rendered 'stewardship.' The idea conveyed is that of the whole management and arrangement of a fully organized society. The metaphorical language of the N. T. has place for all that the word implies. God is the Householder (as in the parables of Matt. xiii, xx, xxi; Luke xiii, xiv), the church His household (1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 2, &c.); the saints the members of the household (Eph. ii. 19); and the ministers God's stewards (1 Cor. iv). The word had been extended to statecraft by Aristotle and others, and so sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, *I say*, in whom 11 also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; to the end that we should 12

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ecclesiastical writers used it readily of the kingdom of God, the central fact of which was the Incarnation. Hence '*the* dispensation' came to mean pre-eminently Christ's becoming man and all that it involved, so that the word became a technical term for the Incarnation. Lightfoot thinks this later usage had its origin in this passage.

the times, or 'seasons' (marg.), are the successive stages in the growth of the kingdom of God, now perfected in the work and mission of Christ.

to sum up. Abbott says the word 'supplies the content of the "mystery," the object of the "good pleasure," and the object reserved for the "dispensation."' There is no reference in the word to the idea of 'restoration to a former state,' a sense that has sometimes been given to it.

in the heavens. The marginal rendering 'upon' is less likely than 'in,' both on the grounds of MS. authority and of linguistic usage.

There is a doctrinal value and significance in these phrases as well as great poetic beauty. When new aspects of false teaching appeared, Paul knew how to meet them by bringing into light new aspects of the Divine revelation. Christ is Lord in heaven as on earth, and all existences are subordinate to him. This is insisted upon and elaborated in the Epistle to the Colossians, when the special danger of exalting other spiritual beings at the expense of Christ was markedly present (cf. Col. i. 13–18).

11. we were made a heritage. This rendering does not seem so suitable to the context, or to the use of the word elsewhere, as does the rendering of the A. V., 'we have obtained an inheritance.' The emphasis is to be laid upon the grace that has given us the inheritance. It is not a right, but a gift. That is the writer's thought. The sense is that of the O. T. poet, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance' (Ps. xvi. 5). The idea of merit or right is clearly excluded by the words which follow: 'having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.'

12. to the end that we, &c. Some translate, 'that we, to the praise of his glory, should be those who have before had hopes in Christ,' thus laying emphasis on the Messianic expectations of the Jews. This is a forceful rendering, suits well the construction of

be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped
13 in Christ: in whom ye also, having heard the word of the
truth, the gospel of your salvation,—in whom, having
also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of
14 promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the
redemption of *God's* own possession, unto the praise of
his glory.

15 For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the

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the sentence, and is in accord with the thought of the following verse. It is natural to give the 'before' some special reference to the Jews either 'before the coming of the historical Jesus,' or 'before the conversion of the heathen.'

13. The Gentiles are now inheritors of the same blessings, and have their assurance of them in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Spirit of promise is, of course, the Spirit that had been promised. The interpretation, 'the Spirit which brings a promise' is less likely and less suitable.

14. earnest. The original word occurs in 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5, and is not Greek, but Semitic. It occurs in Hebrew in Gen. xxxviii. 17, 18, 20. As it occurs in classical Greek writers, it is supposed to have found its way into that language through the Phœnicians. It is found also in Latin writers, who may have obtained it from the Semitic speech of Carthage. The meaning of the word is that of 'a portion of the purchase-money given as a pledge of full payment.' It is of importance to notice the identity of nature in the earnest and the final payment. As Lightfoot indicates, there is another side to the metaphor, 'The Spirit has, as it were, a lien upon us.'

i. 15-23. *Paul's thanksgiving for the faithful witness of those to whom he writes, and his prayer for their increase in knowledge and spiritual gifts.*

Paul, hearing of the good repute of their faith, ceases not to thank God on this account, and also prays that the Spirit of Christ's illumination may be bestowed upon all the Christians whom his words will reach. This grace will enable them to understand the grandeur of their Christian calling, with its hopes, its present privileges, its powers of victory bestowed through the might of the indwelling and living Christ. God raised Christ from the dead, and gave him his glory in heaven, that throughout the whole universe he might reign and share the fruits of his victory with his church, which is the body of which he is head and is made glorious by being filled with his fullness.

15. For this cause. These words refer to the whole of the

Lord Jesus which is among you, and which *ye shew*
toward all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, 16
making mention *of you* in my prayers; that the God of 17
our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto
you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge

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former paragraph. It is the greatness of the Christian's inheritance that causes the Apostle to offer continual thanks for himself and all who share in it. Cf. the occurrence of the same phrase in Col. i. 9, and in Rom. v. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 1 (rendered 'therefore').

I also simply marks the transition of subject from 'you.' In Col. i. 9 the parallel has 'we also,' because Timothy is there associated with Paul.

having heard. This is taken as one of the strong arguments against the Epistle being directed to Ephesus, since the Christians there were personally known to Paul. In Philem. 5 the participle being in the present tense has a different significance, and is quite applicable to a personal friend. The phrase may have been used as most suitable to all to whom the letter was sent, and not unsuitable to any. The expression 'among you' seems to strengthen this explanation.

and which. The words 'and the love which,' given in the margin, are found in many excellent MSS., and the authority for and against them is about equal. Their insertion is supported by Col. i. 4. 'Faith toward all the saints' is a difficult expression, and the omission can be most naturally explained by the fact that the eye of the copyist might easily pass over the words that intervene between two identical ones that, in the original, follow close upon one another.

16. making mention: the phrase so rendered may mean also 'remembering.'

17. the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. This phrase has not its exact parallel elsewhere, though the combination 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' (cf. verse 3) occurs several times. The purpose seems to be that of encouragement in prayer; cf. Heb. v. 7, 8.

the Father of glory: i. e. the Father to whom belongs glory; cf. Acts vii. 2. For the thought cf. verses 8 and 9 above.

in the knowledge of him. The punctuation adopted by Westcott and Hort, which seems to render the meaning of the sentence more clear, is to substitute a comma for a semicolon after 'him' and so connect the words closely with those that follow, thus affording the explanation of the way in which 'the eyes of the heart' are to be enlightened.

18 of him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that
ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the
19 riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and
what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who
believe, according to that working of the strength of his
20 might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him
from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in
21 the heavenly *places*, far above all rule, and authority, and

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18. eyes of your heart. The expression 'eye of the soul' is found in Plato and Aristotle. In Rom. i. 21 we read of the 'darkening of the heart.' Cf. also Matt. vi. 22, 23.

what the riches of the glory of his inheritance. The full significance of each word is to be allowed in this magnificent cumulative expression.

in the saints. This should rather be rendered 'among the saints.' These great gifts of God are only properly realized in the community of believers. The perfection of the inheritance is to be found in the kingdom.

19. according to that working, &c. The three words here used in combination appear to mean separately, in the order in which they occur:—

(1) The actual exercise of power.
(2) Power expressing itself in overcoming resistance.
(3) Inherent power. (Abbott.)

20. Cf. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

at his right hand in the heavenly places. Some would insist on the literalness of these expressions, but they are clearly metaphors to imply the dignity and honour of Christ's exaltation. 'We look upward,' says Abbott appropriately, 'in order to look away from visible things.'

21. far above all rule, &c. These names (cf. Col. i. 16) must be taken in a general sense as descriptive of all powers and authorities in the earth or out of it. In vi. 12 of this Epistle the Apostle uses the two first terms of evil powers, and in Tit. iii. 1 of earthly powers, without any note of characterization. The indefiniteness of the expressions, and the varied words used here and in Colossians, give no warrant for the elaborate classifications of the angelic hierarchy found in later writers, and rendered familiar by their adoption in Dante's *Paradiso* and Milton's *Paradise Lost.* Paul's purpose here is not speculative, but practical. He does not give sidelights on revelation, but asserts a great truth, admirably expressed by Lightfoot: 'It matters not by what title [these

power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not
only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and 22
gave him to be head over all things to the church, which 23
is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

And you *did he quicken*, when ye were dead through 2

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spiritual beings] are called, or whether real or imaginary, Christ is elevated above all.'

in this world. The marginal rendering 'age' here and elsewhere throughout the N. T. better suggests the temporal idea of 'dispensation' which the word in the original signifies, rather than the local idea which 'world' conveys to the English reader.

22. put all things in subjection: a reminiscence of Ps. viii. 6, which is quoted in 1 Cor. xv. 27.

23. which is his body. An emphatic form of the relative pronoun is here used = 'which, in fact, is his body.'

fulness. The word, so translated, is a difficult one to interpret, especially in this particular context. The idea of Christ's 'filling all things' recurs in iv. 10. How then is the church called his 'fulness'? There are three main renderings:—

(1) 'Fulness,' in its obvious sense, understood as denoting the church filled with the graces and gifts of Christ.

(2) 'Fulness' as = 'perfection.' The church is Christ's perfect work.

(3) 'Fulness' in the sense of 'complement.' Christ is the Head, the church is the body. The one is not complete without the other. Christ needs the church, as the church needs Christ.

The third interpretation seems to present fewest difficulties.

ii. 1–10. *Transformed lives and their goal.*

The great work of the Divine grace began in men dead in their sins. The life they then lived, following blindly the powers of evil, with no thought above self-pleasing, drifting in the world's ways to destruction, was a living death. But the love of God, going out in its wonderful freeness, touched such men and set within their hearts the germ of the new life, made them companions of Jesus, and sharers in his glory. And this same generous love has yet greater things in store for men, and surprises for the world. Each disciple has 'his ways' prepared 'in Christ,' and is being moulded into his likeness.

This whole paragraph is a striking instance of Paul's most intricate and difficult style. Sentences are broken by emotion and passion. A word suggests a new thought, which he at once pursues. Lest his meaning should be missed, he does not hesitate

2 your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked
according to the course of this world, according to the
prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now
3 worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we
also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the

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to return to and repeat, in almost identical words, a truth already clearly stated.

1. did he quicken. There is no word in the original to correspond with 'did he quicken.' We must look forward, therefore, to verse 5 before we find a verb, and by that time the object with which he started has been lost sight of, and changed to 'us.' This confusion may be taken as a clear proof of the identification of Jew and Gentile in the writer's mind. Attempts to bring the opening clause under the government of a verb, e. g. 'filleth' in the preceding chapter, are not convincing, although such constructions do occur (cf. v. 22).

2. wherein . . . ye walked: to 'walk in sin' or 'in holiness' is a Hebrew expression; cf. Pss. xxvi. 11, lxxxvi. 11; Prov. xix. 1; Dan. iv. 37, and verse 10 below.

course of this world: 'spirit of the age' is a good paraphrase of the words. The exact collocation is not found elsewhere. Some interpreters have supposed the word 'age' or 'course' to be used here in the technical sense employed by the later Gnostic writers, and would render the whole phrase as, 'the Evil One,' but there is no sufficient ground for such an interpretation, and similar expressions used elsewhere by Paul (e. g. 1 Cor. i. 20, iii. 19, &c.) enable us to understand this one with sufficient clearness.

the prince of the power of the air: this is a term not easily explained. It is not enough to assume with some that 'air' here means 'darkness,' and then compare such passages as vi. 12 and Col. i. 13, for there is no proof of such usage. There seems to have been a current idea that spirits (especially evil ones) inhabited the air, and that to this belief Paul refers.

Another question arises as to whether the expression 'spirit that now worketh' is in apposition to the word 'prince' (the 'case' is not the same), or grammatically subject to it. The latter seems more probable, so that the rendering would be not 'the prince who is the spirit,' but 'the prince of the spirit.' The spirit is thus the general influence that controls the class referred to.

sons of disobedience: this is another Hebrew form of expression; cf. Prov. xxxi. 5; 2 Sam. vii. 10.

3. we also: i. e. the Jews.

lusts of our flesh: the expression is not to be limited to

desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature
children of wrath, even as the rest:—but God, being rich 4
in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even 5
when we were dead through our trespasses, quickened us
together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and 6
raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in
the heavenly *places*, in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to 7
come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in

bodily appetites, but includes all the influences of the lower nature. In Col. ii. 18 the Apostle speaks of a man 'being vainly puffed up by the mind of his flesh.' Butler's phrase 'particular propensions' is almost synonymous.

desires . . . of the mind (or rather, with the marg. 'thoughts') is a somewhat strange phrase. Elsewhere the word rendered 'thoughts' is used in a good sense, as in 1 Pet. i. 13, 'girding up the loins of your thoughts,' 2 Pet. iii. 1, 'I stir up your pure thoughts'; but a transition can be seen in iv. 18 of this Epistle, where Paul speaks of their 'being darkened in their thought' and in Col. i. 21 we read 'enemies in your thought.' There the thoughts are looked at through the medium of the flesh by which they are stained. Their—

> 'nature is subdued
> To what it works in, like the dyer's hand [1].'

children of wrath: this is a Hebrew idiom equivalent to 'worthy of' or 'in danger of.' Abbott cites, in illustration, Deut. xxv. 2, 'a son of stripes,' i. e. 'worthy of stripes'; 1 Sam. xxvi. 16, 'son of death,' i. e. 'worthy to die' (cf. 2 Sam. xii. 5 R. V.)

the rest: i. e. 'the heathen'; cf. 1 Thess. iv. 13.

4. **for his great love:** cf. Philem 9, 'for love's sake.'

5. **(by grace have ye been saved).** The parenthetical clause is inserted in order forcibly to remind the readers that they can do nothing by themselves, but that all is the outcome of God's gracious love.

6. **in Christ Jesus:** again the dominant note of the Epistle recurs. The words shew that these results are not gained by simply sharing in Christ's victory, but through virtue of being one with him—the great theme of this Epistle.

7. **in the ages to come:** the conception need not be *confined* to the future life, though the phrase obviously embraces it.

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[1] Shakespeare, *Sonnet* cxi.

8 kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: for by grace have ye
been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it*
9 *is* the gift of God: not of works, that no man should
10 glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ
Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we
should walk in them.
11 Wherefore remember, that aforetime ye, the Gentiles

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8. for by grace, &c. In these words the theme of the parenthetical clause (verse 5) is resumed and amplified.

and that: these words may refer either (1) to the single word 'faith' or (2) to the whole preceding clause. The latter interpretation seems the more suitable one.

10. workmanship: the word so rendered is only used once elsewhere in Paul's writings, viz. Rom. i. 20, where it is rendered 'the things that are made.' Many of the ancient interpreters confined the word here also to the physical creation. While it is hardly likely that it can be used entirely of the 'spiritual creation,' we may say that the word conveys in itself the analogy, and, inasmuch as the latter is so much more important, centres our thought upon that. Literally rendered it reads, 'We are his poem.'

Two constructions of the latter part of the verse are possible. (1) With the verb transitive as in the text, 'which God afore prepared,' in which case the life of good works is represented as existing ideally in the mind and purpose of God, and that Christians are led to adopt it as their own. (2) With the verb intransitive, 'for which God afore prepared us,' an interpretation that 'strongly accentuates the moral purpose of the preparation.' (Abbott.)

ii. 11–22. *The share of the Gentiles in the covenant mercies of Israel through Christ's mission and death.*

In common with all the Gentiles, those to whom he is writing once stood outside all covenant relations with God, since these privileges were confined to Israel, and sealed by the sign of circumcision. Not only had Israel's Messiah no meaning for them, but they knew not Israel's God. Now all has been changed by Christ's advent. His death—by its perfect sacrifice—broke down the barriers that the ritual law had erected. Henceforth Jew and Gentile have only one way of access. Christ reconciled them by making one new way for each, namely, himself. He heralded and accomplished peace with men, through peace with God. Men once enemies to one another and to God may now approach him as Father, through the Spirit of the Son. One solid fabric is to be reared, of which Christ is the corner stone, in which living temple

in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which
is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that 12
ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from
the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the
covenants of the promise, having no hope and without
God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye that once 13
were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For 14
he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down
the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh 15

Jew and Gentile may alike be found as stones, for it is the shrine of the Holy Spirit.

11. Wherefore: i. e. 'because of the blessings they now enjoy.'

called Uncircumcision. Paul here depreciates the merely physical circumcision—'so-called circumcision'—with which (as in Col. ii. 11) he contrasts the spiritual circumcision. Cf. also Phil. iii. 3; Rom. ii. 28, 29.

12. alienated from the commonwealth of Israel. 'Commonwealth' here refers to the theocratic kingdom, not, of course, the merely historical and earthly one. It is Israel, as related to God, from which they were estranged. In any other sense they were obviously aliens.

having no hope. This must not be limited to the special hope of the Messiah, but presents the Gentile world as absolutely hopeless, till the light of Christ came to them.

without God: as not knowing Him—'the deepest stage of heathen misery,' says Meyer.

13. once . . . far off: the phraseology is suggested by Isa. lvii. 19, 'Peace, peace, to him that is far off and to him that is near.' Cf. also verse 17. The form of expression 'to bring near,' in the sense of 'gaining proselytes,' is said to have been common with the Rabbis, and Abbott refers to one instance of a woman who came to Rabbi Eliezer, confessing great transgression and asking to be made a proselyte, in the formula, 'Rabbi, bring me near,' but he refused. Rabbi Joshua, however, received her, whereupon his disciples in amazement asked, 'Rabbi Eliezer put her far off, how then dost thou bring her nigh?'

14. who made both one. Chrysostom likens the process to that of an artificer in metal who should have the power to melt down a statue of silver and one of lead, and the result should be a statue of gold.

the middle wall. The word employed in the original is a rare one, and its grammatical connexion with the following word slightly ambiguous. Is it 'the separating partition' or, 'the

the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in

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partition which consisted in the fence.' The latter is probably correct. The reference is generally supposed to be to the wall in the temple at Jerusalem that separated the Court of the Gentiles from the temple proper. It is worthy of remark that it was Trophimus, a native of Ephesus, whom Paul was charged with taking within the sacred precincts.

15. having abolished. There is considerable difficulty as to the grammatical construction of the words in verses 14 and 15. It is possible to take the connexion in two or three different ways. The verbs 'made' and 'brake down' are in the original participles, while the word translated 'enmity' follows immediately upon the word 'brake down.' The connexion of the phrase 'in his flesh' is also uncertain. Two main renderings are possible :—

(1) 'Who brake down the middle wall of partition, having in his flesh abolished the enmity, viz. the law' (as in the R. V. text). Against this it is objected that the 'law' cannot be fairly termed the 'enmity,' and that the verb means rather 'to deprive of power' than 'to destroy.'

(2) 'Who in his flesh brake down the middle wall of partition, viz. the enmity, having abolished the law.' In this case it is difficult to identify 'the wall of partition' with 'the enmity.' The breaking down of the wall was consequent upon the abolishing of the law.

An attempt has been made by one of the most recent commentators on the passage at a satisfactory explanation by supposing all the words that intervene between the word 'enmity' in verse 15, and its repetition in verse 16 to constitute a parenthesis. The words in verse 17 would then resume the interrupted current of thought in verse 14. This view is supported by Paul's well-known habit of 'going off at a word,' &c., permitting some important word to suggest a new train of thought which he pursues, regardless of the logical sequence of his argument. Instances are to be found in this Epistle in ii. 1, where the word 'sins' suggests a digression, and in iii. 1, where the word 'Gentiles' causes him apparently to abandon a line of thought he does not resume for a whole chapter. (See note on the verse.) In this case, however, the parallel is not quite obvious, and there are certain grammatical considerations that make it difficult to adopt the interpretation. The 'enmity,' as we have seen, is not to be identified with the 'law,' but that would be the only way in which the transition would be at all natural. The general sense, however, is not at all difficult to grasp. Christ has made the law of the letter powerless, that he might make much more powerful the law of the Spirit. The former created a bond of separation—the latter a bond of union. The former restrained, the latter impels.

ordinances; that he might create in himself of the twain
one new man, *so* making peace; and might reconcile 16
them both in one body unto God through the cross,
having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and 17
preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to
them that were nigh: for through him we both have 18
our access in one Spirit unto the Father. So then ye 19
are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-
citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,
being built upon the foundation of the apostles and 20
prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner

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one new man: 'new' because 'in Christ Jesus' there is no longer 'Greek and Jew' (cf. Col. iii. 10, 11).

16. reconcile. In the original this is an intensive form of the ordinary verb, and the only other instance of its occurrence is in Col. i. 20.

in one body = 'the one new man'; cf. the previous verse.

through the cross: the enmity that came to its full fruit in effecting the death on the cross he slew by that death.

17. preached peace: *lit.* 'preached good tidings of peace.' The reference is best understood as being made to the preaching of the apostles. Christ speaks through his servants.

19. strangers and sojourners: 'strangers' is a general term for 'foreigners,' while 'sojourners' is a designation for 'foreigners resident in a state without possessing the rights of citizenship.'

saints: the word has here quite a general reference to all believers. Cf. i. 1.

the household of God. Cf. 1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. x. 20; 1 Pet. iv. 17. The thought of 'house' in the word seems to have suggested the metaphor to which he proceeds in the next verse. This lack of precision in figurative language is common in Paul's writing, arising apparently from the rapidity of his thought and the richness of his imagination. Cf. iii. 17, and note.

20. the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Of these words four interpretations are possible:—

(1) The foundation on which apostles and prophets have built.
(2) The foundation which apostles and prophets have laid.
(3) The foundation consisting of apostles and prophets.
(4) The foundation on which apostles and prophets have been built.

Of these (1) and (4) confuse between 'foundation' and 'corner

21 stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed
together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;
22 in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation
of God in the Spirit.

stone' (cf. 1 Pet. ii. 4), (2) is very generally accepted, but (3) is gaining favour with modern interpreters, who quote such passages as Rev. xxi. 14 and 2 Tim. ii. 19 in support of their view.

the chief corner stone. It is Christ that holds the fabric together; the word rendered 'himself' might also mean 'its,' i. e. 'the foundation's corner stone,' and it is so understood by many interpreters. The 'corner stone' of the foundation seems a curious expression, and the important point surely is to relate Christ to the whole building.

The 'prophets' referred to in this verse (as in iii. 5 and iv. 11 of this Epistle) are almost certainly the N. T. order of prophets. The two classes 'apostles and prophets' are closely linked grammatically in the original, which would not have been likely had the O. T. prophets been meant.

21. each several building. According to the reading of some MSS. we should render, 'all the building,' but this is not well supported, and it may easily have been a scribe's slip. The rendering of the R. V. marg. 'every building' is best. The picture is that of a great pile of buildings being gradually completed, so that each separate part takes its place in the whole design and perfects it. The great temple at Ephesus may well have suggested the image to the Apostle's mind (see Introduction, p. 15). Cicero has a striking sentence in his *Dream of Scipio* that forms an interesting parallel:—'The whole world is well called the Temple of God. Whoever is introduced into this temple, let him know that he ought to live as if he were a priest.'

The word 'building' has the same ambiguity in Greek that it has in English, so is suitably employed of the parts of the whole, no one of which might at any moment be called a 'structure.'

groweth: the present tense indicates the process as always going on.

a holy temple. The Greek order is 'a temple holy in the Lord,' and this brings out the meaning more clearly. The holiness consists in the growing into Christ.

22. ye . . . are builded: again the present tense to mark the process; cf. 1 Pet. ii. 5. The 'together' marks the unity of Greek and Jew.

for a habitation: the marginal 'into' is better.

in the Spirit: these words describe the method of God's indwelling. It is by His Spirit that He inhabits His temple.

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in 3
behalf of you Gentiles,—if so be that ye have heard of 2
the dispensation of that grace of God which was given
me to you-ward; how that by revelation was made 3

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iii. 1–13. *God's commission to Paul, the Jew, to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. His sufferings a seal of his ministry.*

Paul has sympathetic knowledge of the former and latter state of the Gentile Christians. He is a prisoner owing to his zeal on their behalf. His knowledge of the gospel came direct from Christ himself. It is a recent revelation to the world, this glorious truth that God's grace is alike free to men of every nation, and God has empowered him to be the herald of the glad tidings. He was in himself a most unworthy messenger, but God fitted him for the task. It was a new message for the world, but not a new thought in the heart of God. Nay, it was His eternal purpose, and He designs the church to be a witness to all His universe of the perfect work of His Son, Jesus Christ, through whom all may come to the Father. There is no need, therefore, that his friends should be discouraged at Paul's imprisonment, for the Divine path of glory leads through suffering. If they share in the one, they will share in the other.

1. For this cause: i. e. knowing the former and latter condition of the Gentile converts he can understand their needs and how to pray for them.

the prisoner of Christ Jesus. Cf. iv. 1; Philem. 9; 2 Tim. i. 8.

you Gentiles: the clause is abruptly broken off, the word 'Gentiles' leading him to think of another subject. We do not find the continuation of the idea introduced by the words 'for this cause' until verse 14 is reached, and not till iv. 1 do we find the relevancy of the title 'prisoner.' His zeal on behalf of the Gentiles had led to his imprisonment; cf. Acts xxi. 21, 28, xxii. 22.

Some versions, and many interpreters, understand the verb 'to be,' and read, 'For this cause I am the prisoner,' but the explanation above given is much more consistent with Paul's manner of writing, and also with his thought. It is not like him to give such prominence to his imprisonment as to bring it in as the culmination of his great argument.

2. if so be that ye have heard: these words are an indication that the Apostle had not visited those to whom he is writing, and so that, at least, the Epistle is not destined exclusively for the church at Ephesus.

the dispensation of that grace. It is the 'grace,' not the 'stewardship,' that was given for the help of the Gentiles.

known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few
4 words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my
5 understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other
generations was not made known unto the sons of men,
as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and

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3. the mystery. The reference of the word (see i. 9 and note) is apparently to the truth of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the blessings of the gospel; see verse 6.

as I wrote afore in few words. The reference is doubtless to the immediately preceding paragraphs about the Gentiles and their privileges.

4. when ye read: in the original this is one word—a present participle—meaning 'while reading' or 'as ye read.' Hort thinks the reference is to the reading of the O. T. prophets, but this seems a forced and unnecessary interpretation. The natural reference is to the preceding passage of the Epistle.

the mystery of Christ: cf. Col. iv. 3, i.e. the free admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of the new covenant. Some have considered the language here used to be boastful, and therefore not to be attributed to Paul. This they have used as an argument against the authenticity of the Epistle. But it seems natural and fitting that he should remind his readers how great an authority, by the grace of God, he is on this question of the position and privileges of the Gentiles. It was a matter vital to those to whom he writes. It would seem, too, that they were face to face with false, Judaizing teachers, and therefore had the more pressing need to have this truth confirmed. If he was personally unknown to his correspondents there was the more need for his vindicating his right to give an authoritative utterance on the question. That self-laudation is far enough from his thoughts is shewn by the language of verse 8.

5. in other generations: some have rendered, but not so well, '*to* other generations,' viz. 'to the sons of men.'

sons of men: an O. T. equivalent for 'men'; has its only N. T. parallel in Mark iii. 28.

holy apostles and prophets. Some have taken exception to the epithet 'holy' as applied by Paul here to the class to which he himself belonged. In order to avoid the supposed presumption it has been suggested to put a comma after the word 'holy' and take it as a noun, translating, 'to the saints, his apostles and prophets.' But why should he not use the epithet, when all Christians are addressed as saints? Cf. i. 1; 1 Cor. vi. 2 and Col. i. 26 (where the Apostle himself is included).

A more real difficulty arises when we ask, How could Paul say

prophets in the Spirit; *to wit*, that the Gentiles are 6
fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the
gospel, whereof I was made a minister, according to 7
the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power. Unto me, who 8
am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given,
to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of
Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation 9

that the truth of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the blessings of the kingdom had been revealed to the apostles as a whole, when here and elsewhere he speaks of this declaration as a special feature of his own ministry? So strongly has this objection been felt that some have rejected the latter half of this verse as a later addition. There is no MS. authority for such a course, and it is, at best, an arbitrary way of solving the problem. The most satisfactory answer is to say that Paul, long before this letter was written, had brought the others round to his point of view; cf. Acts xv. and Gal. ii. 7-10.

in the Spirit. These words are to be closely connected with the word 'revealed,' i.e. 'revealed in the Spirit unto.'

6. fellow-heirs . . . fellow-members . . . fellow-partakers. 'The accumulation of epithets is due to the importance of the matter; there is no climax, for "fellow-partakers" is not stronger than "fellow-members"' (Abbott).

7. In this verse the piling up of words to emphasize the Godward side of the Apostle's ministry is noteworthy.

8. less than the least. This represents one word in Greek, and it is a very remarkable one. He boldly builds it up of a superlative form with a comparative termination. His thought is like a torrent that overflows all customary limits and must cut for itself a new channel. For the mental and spiritual attitude the word denotes, we may compare the well-known utterances of Augustine, Bunyan, and Samuel Rutherford, e. g. 'The less sin the more sense of sin,' 'The best saints are the most sensible of sin.'

unsearchable. 'How canst thou preach these riches if they are unsearchable?' asks one of the Greek Fathers[1], and answers his own question in the words, 'This very thing, says the Apostle, I preach, that they are unsearchable.'

9. to make all men see. The marginal reading, 'bring to light what is,' is preferable. The insertion of the word 'all' has large

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[1] Theodoret.

of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God
10 who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places* might be made known through the church the manifold
11 wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which

MS. authority, but it is easy to understand how it might have crept in, since the verb seemed to require an object. Both from usage and from the shade of meaning so given, the reading that omits the word is the better one. The emphasis is then laid on the revelation.

dispensation. The traditional text, followed by the A. V., reads 'fellowship' here—a curious variant, poorly supported by MS. authority. The meaning of 'dispensation' here is 'arrangement' or 'administration.' The 'mystery' is that referred to in the earlier verses of this chapter, viz. the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of God's kingdom. The administration of this was Paul's peculiar task.

from all ages is literally 'from the ages,' and finds its only N.T. parallel in Col. i. 26. The phrase means 'from the beginning.'

who created all things. The A. V., on the authority of the traditional text, adds 'by Jesus Christ,' which gives the words a reference to the new spiritual creation. But there can be no question the reading of the R. V. is the correct one. What then is the force of the words? Probably God's creative power is cited as sufficient reason for His right to hide or reveal when and how He wills. The connexion with the preceding words, which some suggest, so as to read 'created all things in order to reveal in the church His varied wisdom,' introduces additional difficulty without sufficient warrant.

10. unto the principalities, &c.: cf. 1 Pet. i. 12, 'which things angels desire to look into,' and Col. ii. 10–15 with notes. The mystery is worthy the consideration of angels. The church is to be the instrument in this revelation.

manifold. The idea conveyed is probably that of Heb. i. 1, 'God, having of old time spoken . . . by divers portions and in divers manners.' Some of the Greek interpreters refer the word to the contrast between the old dispensation and the new. 'Now,' says one (quoted by Abbott *in loco*), 'the wisdom of God is known no longer as simple, but as manifold, producing contraries by contraries; by death, life: by dishonour, glory: by sin, righteousness: by a curse, blessing: by weakness, power.'

11. eternal: the *lit.* meaning, 'purpose of the ages,' is given in the margin, and 'eternal' is at best an interpretation that may be questioned. It is at least as likely that the idea Paul meant to

he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we 12
have boldness and access in confidence through our
faith in him. Wherefore I ask that ye faint not at my 13
tribulations for you, which are your glory.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from 14, 15

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convey was that expressed by Tennyson in the line, 'Through the ages one increasing purpose runs.' Two interpretations of **purposed,** *lit.* 'made,' are possible: the reference being either to the 'formation' or 'execution' of the purpose. The former seems more in accordance with the ordinary meaning of the idiom employed, while the latter seems to give a fuller significance to the statement.

12. boldness. The word so rendered means originally 'freedom of speech,' and is frequently so used in the N. T., e. g. Acts iv. 13; 2 Cor. iii. 12. The 'Outspoken' (a form derived from this word) is a name Lucian gives himself in one of his dialogues. As the idea of freedom of speech denotes courage, so the conception of lack of fear, and hence 'confidence,' grew out of the primary meaning; 'access,' cf. ii. 18, is here used in the intransitive sense. Meyer compares Rom. viii. 38, 39 for a grand expression of the idea here stated in simpler terms.

faith in him: *lit.* 'his faith,' i. e. faith which has him for its object, which springs from and centres in him.

13. 'The greater the office, the less becoming would it be to lose heart' (Abbott).

As the margin indicates, two interpretations are possible, either, 'I ask that I may not faint,' or, 'I ask that ye may not faint.' The latter seems, on every ground, much more probable; cf. Phil. ii. 17.

which are your glory. The Greek verb, as the R.V. margin indicates, is in the singular, since the relative pronoun (a specially emphatic form) embraces the whole idea that has preceded. The tribulations of the Apostle make up one whole significant fact, which constitutes the glory of those to whom he is writing.

iii. 14-19. *A prayer for the knowledge of truth.*

Since those to whom he writes are parts of the spiritual temple (see chap. ii. *ad fin.*), and sharers in the Divine life, he prays most earnestly that they may possess the best gifts the Divine Father can bestow. He would have them increase in spiritual power and wisdom, so that themselves living in love they may be able to interpret the secrets of the eternal love, and become partakers of His perfect fullness.

14. For this cause: cf. verse 1, and the note there.

I bow my knees. These words indicate the earnestness of

whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
16 that he would grant you, according to the riches of his
glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through
17 his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in
your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted

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the prayer; cf. Luke xxii. 41 (Jesus); Acts vii. 60 (Stephen), xx. 36 (Paul, and let it be specially noted that this was in company with the Ephesian elders). The ordinary posture in prayer was standing; cf. Mark xi. 25; Luke xviii. 11, 13.

unto the Father. The A. V., following the traditional text, adds 'of our Lord Jesus Christ,' but these words are omitted by the best MSS. and authorities. It is not difficult to understand how they could be inserted, but had they been found in the original it is not easy to account for their being dropped. The idea of the fatherhood is purposely made as universal as possible in this connexion.

15. from whom . . . is named: i. e. gets its name of fatherhood from Him; cf. John xvii. 21. The earthly families have received whatever truth of such high relationship they have attained from the eternal fatherhood of God, and all that springs from it. The R. V. margin reads 'fatherhood' as the translation of the word rendered 'family' in the text, but it has been denied that the word ever bears this meaning. Since several of the Greek commentators so understood it, the modern writers may very well be mistaken. Either rendering has its difficulties, mainly arising out of the question how we are to interpret the words 'every family (or fatherhood) in heaven.' By some it is understood of the 'angels,' who are considered as belonging to groups, tribes, or families. It appears to be most easily interpreted in the general sense, 'Whatever is denoted by family relationship centring in the thought of fatherhood—whether these societies exist in heaven or on earth—gains all the richness of its meaning from the fatherhood of God, of which every true element in it is a reflexion.'

16. riches of his glory: cf. Rom. ix. 23.

the inward man is obviously 'the higher nature'—'the moral life' of man; cf. Rom. vii. 22, and 2 Cor. iv. 16. This it is that the Divine Spirit lays hold of and strengthens in purpose, resolve, and practice. This is the groundwork of all systems of idealistic ethics, from that of Plato in the ancient world down to that of T. H. Green in modern times. Reason, conscience, and will are the faculties of the 'inward man,' and these the Spirit of God can regenerate, and refashion.

17. Cf. John xiv. 23 for the ground of the prayer.

and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with 18
all the saints what is the breadth and length and height
and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth 19
knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of
God.

The word rendered **dwell** occurs again, in the N. T., only in Col. i. 19 and ii. 9, though there is a more emphatic compound in 2 Pet. ii. 8.

in your hearts. Neither tongue nor brain will suffice, as Calvin reminds us.

rooted and grounded in love. A slight change in the order of the words seems desirable, viz. 'being rooted and grounded in love to the end that ye may be strong.' This not only corresponds closely with the order of the words in the original, but gives a clearer meaning, and is more natural. They have been thoroughly grounded in love that they may be capable of further advance. Progress will be safe for those 'broad-based'—the highest grace of all.

For a similar mixture of metaphors cf. Col. ii. 7, 'rooted and builded,' and 1 Cor. iii. 9, 'God's husbandry, God's building.' The explanation seems to be that the words are not used at all as figures, but in their applied sense.

18. may be strong. The verb is used only here in the N. T., and is not at all common in Greek literature. It signifies 'to be quite able' to undertake a task.

what is the breadth, &c. The object to which these qualities refer is left indefinite, but seems rightly understood as the 'love of Christ' mentioned in the following verse. Others have understood 'the mystery' (see verse 4); the dimensions of the Christian temple (see ii. 21); or a combination of the two, but the nearer and simpler reference seems the best. The older commentators revelled in explanations of the four qualities, but in those allegorical flights we need not follow them. Nothing, as Calvin says, can be less after the mind of Paul than such subtleties of interpretation.

19. to know. This is a stronger word than 'apprehend' of the preceding verse.

The paradoxical language makes the magnitude of the love more evident. The reading of a few MSS., 'the love of Christ which passeth the love of knowledge,' is both inadequately supported and unnecessary. It has probably originated from the suggestion of an unimaginative scribe. For once Luther has shewn himself unable or afraid to permit himself to follow the idea of the Apostle, and gives the weak and prosaic interpretation, 'to love Christ is better than knowledge.'

that ye may be filled, &c. This clause is not easy of

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly
above all that we ask or think, according to the power
21 that worketh in us, unto him *be* the glory in the church
and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and
ever. Amen.
4 I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to

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interpretation, and has been very variously explained, the general thought being, 'that ye may be filled, even as God is full.' Others take it as meaning, 'that ye may have God fully dwelling in you.' Men said of Spinoza that he was 'a God-intoxicated man.' The idea is justifiable, but, as the instance quoted shews, is easily capable of abuse.

It seems most satisfactory to interpret the words in a general sense, as 'being filled with all moral and spiritual qualities, which God designs His people to possess, that so they may become "partakers of the Divine nature."'

iii. 20, 21. *An outburst of praise.*

20. Great as the prayer has been, greater still is the possibility of fulfilment. Paul uses his favourite excess of superlatives to indicate this idea. He is extremely fond of words compounded with 'beyond'; of twenty-eight such compounds in the N. T., it has been found that twenty-two are to be met with in the Epistles of Paul and in that to the Hebrews, and twenty of them do not occur outside these limits.

21. and in Christ Jesus. Many authorities for the text omit 'and.' This omission would emphasize Christ's vital union with the church as being that which enabled it truly to ascribe glory to God.

This grand doxology brings to a fitting conclusion the first part of the Epistle.

iv. 1–16. *Outward and inward unity.*

Paul from his prison-house beseeches his readers to present before the world a bearing consistent with the name of Christ, eagerly endeavouring to shew a spirit of unity and peace. This character will best commend their faith, which is based on unity—its oneness of aim, purpose, and origin all springing from the one God and Father. Christ, who is on earth and in heaven, manifests a unity in diversity through his manifold working in the agencies of his church—all its members having different offices, but each contributing to its destined and perfect unity. Not only so, but each individual member likewise advances to a firm-based and wide-reaching union with Christ. This living fellowship, under his headship, constitutes the consummation of the church's mission.

walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called,
with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, 2
forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep 3
the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is* 4
one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called

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1. His description of himself as a prisoner adds force to the words that follow, since if a prisoner could thus speak and act, how much easier must it be for the majority of them.

The words **in the Lord** distinguish the character of his imprisonment from that of others.

2. with all lowliness. 'One who knows himself greater in relation to others, but who is contented to be treated as if he were less, such a one is certainly entitled to be called humble-minded; he exhibits *lowliness*' (Abbott). This is the mark of most truly great characters.

longsuffering. The original word is found with two shades of meaning: (1) steadfastness in enduring suffering, cf. Jas. v. 10; Col. i. 11, and (2) forbearance, which is its ordinary significance in the N. T.; cf. Col. iii. 12; Gal. v. 22. The lexicons and commentators quote a fine sentence from Menander in which the word occurs: 'Never ask from God freedom from trouble, but longsuffering.' In this case it is used in the former of the two senses.

forbearing one another in love is the active manifestation of the quality of character designated 'longsuffering.'

3. giving diligence. The A. V. renders 'endeavouring,' which is said to have had the meaning of 'giving diligence' in 1611. Elsewhere, however, the word in the original is not so rendered, save in two instances (1 Thess. ii. 17 and 2 Pet. i. 15), where failure is either possible or actual.

the unity of the Spirit is regarded as an actual possession to be carefully guarded.

the bond of peace: i. e. the bond that consists in peace. In Col. iii. 14 'love' is spoken of as the bond.

4–6. The various aspects of the unity of the whole Christian fellowship is in these verses set forth in an ascending scale.

(1) The spiritual character of the church—one body, one spirit, one hope.

(2) The Source and manifestation of this unity—one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

(3) The Divine Author of all in the threefold aspect of His absolute unity—above, through, and in all.

4. There is no connecting word at all to open this verse. In a sudden and vivid utterance the Apostle proclaims the truth on

5 in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one
6 baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and
7 through all, and in all. But unto each one of us was
the grace given according to the measure of the gift of
8 Christ. Wherefore he saith,

---

which he wishes to insist—'One body and one spirit.' Note the emphasis on the idea of unity in God, in the instruments of redemption, and in the church.

one hope of your calling. Hope is one of the necessary accompaniments of their calling. To be a Christian is to be a man of hope; cf. Col. i. 27; 1 Tim. i. 1, and 1 John iii. 3.

5. one baptism. It has been asked why the other sacrament is not mentioned, a form of question that is difficult to answer. It is always easier to explain what an author says than to account for what he leaves unsaid. Paul's insistence on the bearing of the Communion of the Lord's Supper on the subject of unity in 1 Cor. x. 17, where he says, 'seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body; for we all partake of the one bread,' would seem to favour the likelihood of its introduction here. Probably the Apostle took the one sacrament as implying the other, and also was influenced by the rhetorical device he here adopts of arranging his successive clauses in triads.

6. in all. The 'in you all' of the A. V. follows the reading of a few minor authorities. A better authenticated reading is 'in us all,' but the best is that of the text, which omits the pronoun. There is nothing in the form of the adjectives to decide whether they are masculine or neuter, but the majority decide in favour of the former. To understand them as neuter would be too pantheistic to be Pauline. **over all** obviously designates rulership; **through all** probably denotes 'a sustaining and working presence'; while 'in all' obviously refers to the indwelling of the Divine Spirit.

7. Cf. Rom. xii. 4–6; 1 Cor. xii. 4, &c.

the grace. The definite article points to the special grace possessed by each individual.

according to the measure: cf. Rom. xii. 6.

8. Wherefore he saith. These words are probably better rendered, 'Wherefore it (i. e. the Scripture) saith,' which would naturally be expressed in English by the indefinite phrase, 'Wherefore it is said.' The words in the original are, literally, 'Wherefore saith,' and it is only conjecture that supplies 'he,' meaning 'God.' Paul's forms of introducing quotations vary, sometimes 'saith' alone, or 'the Scripture saith,' or 'David saith,' 'Isaiah saith.' Even when God is clearly the speaker he introduces Moses or Isaiah, as in Rom. x. 19, 20, ix. 17. There is not there-

When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive,
And gave gifts unto men.

---

fore any reasonable ground for supplying 'God' as the subject here, and raising, on that score, an additional difficulty about the words that are treated as a quotation. Cf. also v. 14 and note, where the same form of expression is found.

When he ascended, &c. These words are a reminiscence, but not an exact quotation, of Ps. lxviii. 18. No attempted explanation can at all satisfactorily prove that they are a quotation. They are the words of a well-known passage adapted to the Apostle's purpose, as is often done in the case of our own poets. It has been found that there was a traditional Rabbinic interpretation of the verse similar to that given to it here by Paul. He may not, therefore, have originated the alteration, but, in any case, he adopts it. The words of the Psalm, quoting from the R. V. are—

'Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led *thy* captivity captive;
Thou hast received gifts among men.'

No amount of argument can make 'received' equivalent to 'gave,' and the only satisfactory explanation seems to be that the word is deliberately altered to suit the purpose the writer has in view. He does not base any argument on the quotation, he simply introduces it as descriptive of Christ's action.

he led captivity captive. These words mean, 'he took captive a body of captives,' not 'he took captive the power that captured them,' as it is often misinterpreted.

The whole Epistle has been termed by Dr. Kay, 'the Christians' 68th Psalm,' and other possible reminiscences of the psalm may be traced in the following parallels, which are given by W. Lock in the article on this Epistle in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*:—

ii. 22: 'ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.'

Ps. lxviii. 17: 'The Lord is among them, *as in* Sinai, in the sanctuary.'

iii. 16 and vi. 10: 'that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man.' 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.'

Ps. lxviii. 28, 35: 'Thy God hath commanded thy strength: Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.' 'The God of Israel, he giveth strength and power unto *his* people.'

v. 19: 'singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.'

Ps. lxviii. 3, 4: 'let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God: . . . sing unto God, sing praises to his name.'

9 (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also
10 descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that
descended is the same also that ascended far above all
11 the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave

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9. Now this: i. e. the idea conveyed by the word 'ascended.'

he also descended. Many of the best authorities add 'first,' as in the text of A. V. and margin of R. V. The weight of evidence seems greater for its omission than its insertion, which seems to have taken place very early as an explanatory note introduced from the margin by a copyist.

the lower parts of the earth. These words are capable of two interpretations: either (1) 'The lower as opposed to the higher parts of the earth'—which may be understood as 'the grave,' or as 'Hades,' the land of departed spirits; or (2) 'the lower parts,' viz. those of earth: i. e. the phrase is equivalent to 'this lower earth.'

The latter interpretation seems preferable. Then arises the question of what are the descent and ascent to be understood. On the former interpretation of 'the lower parts,' either the 'grave' with reference to the death of Christ, or 'Hades' with reference to his mysterious ministry to the 'spirits' in prison, have been understood as 'the descent.' The usages of similar phrases elsewhere are against these interpretations, for the words would probably have been clearer and more definite, and since the ascent is from earth to heaven, it is more than probable that the descent is from heaven to earth.

On the latter view, however, two interpretations are still possible. The most general one is to understand the reference as being to the Incarnation and Ascension. It does not appear, however, that this explains the purpose of the reference, viz. the 'giving of gifts,' and therefore several modern commentators have adopted the view that the descent referred to is that of the Holy Spirit; cf. John xiv. 23. The descent of Christ that is of value to his church, that insures its unity, is his dwelling in its members by his Spirit. This seems to give the fullest and most suitable meaning to the passage.

10. above all the heavens. This is probably an allusion to the Jewish belief in seven heavens; cf. 2 Cor. xii. 2 and Heb. iv. 14 with notes; also cf. Ps. cxlviii. 4.

that he might fill all things. This is the end and purpose of Christ's sovereignty; cf. i. 22, 23.

11. Some of the 'gifts' are now enumerated. **apostles:** for their qualifications see Acts i. 8, 21–23; 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. In addition to the 'Twelve,' Barnabas (Acts xiv. 4, 14), James

some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some,
evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the 12
perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering,
unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all 13

---

the Lord's brother (1 Cor. xv. 7), and Silvanus (1 Thess. ii. 6) are so called. In Phil. ii. 25 we have the title given to Epaphroditus (see R. V. margin).

prophets are preachers. Cf. Acts xv. 32; 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

evangelists: probably they were special preachers to the heathen under the direction of the Apostle. Timothy is specially told (2 Tim. iv. 5) to undertake this among his other duties. See also Acts xxi. 8.

pastors and teachers. Do these words denote two separate offices, or two aspects of one office? There is something in the form of the Greek expression that leads one to incline to the latter view. On the other hand, it seems strange that in such a list one class should have a double designation. The class or classes, however, would be more fixed in situation than the former, and would be attached to a special place. The word rendered 'pastor' is literally 'shepherd.' Homer calls Agamemnon 'a shepherd (pastor) of men'; cf. John xxi. 16, 17; 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 2.

12. for the perfecting, &c. There is some question whether the three clauses of this verse be co-ordinate, or the two latter dependent on the first. It does not appear to me that Abbott's contention, (as against the latter interpretation) that 'ministering' must in such a context have an 'official' sense, is valid, and on all other considerations this view of the words seems the best. The idea would then be that these specially gifted men should stir up the saints to further service, and so the circle of blessing widen.

The word rendered 'perfecting' occurs here only in the N. T. It is used by medical writers for the setting of a dislocated limb. The verb from which it comes is used literally of 'mending' nets (Matt. iv. 21), and figuratively of 'restoring' sinners (Gal. vi. 1).

unto the building up of the body: on the mixture of metaphors see iii. 17 and note. Cf. verse 16 and also 1 Cor. viii. 10, and 1 Thess. v. 11.

13. we all: i. e. the whole church. Note the fine contrasts in these two verses:—'fullgrown man' *versus* 'children'; 'unity of the faith' *versus* 'tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine' ('all wind is destructive of unity,' says Bengel); 'the knowledge of the Son of God' *versus* 'the sleight of men' and 'the wiles of error.'

attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge
of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the
14 measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that
we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and
carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight
15 of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but
speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into
16 him, which is the head, *even* Christ; from whom all
the body fitly framed and knit together through that
which every joint supplieth, according to the working
in *due* measure of each several part, maketh the increase
of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

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stature. The word is, in all probability, more accurately rendered 'maturity.' It was used ambiguously in Greek of age and stature (cf. Luke xii. 25 and note), and apparently only the context decided which meaning was appropriate.

14. tossed to and fro. It is best to understand the words as denoting men being tossed to and fro '*like* waves' rather than '*by* waves'; cf. Jas. i. 8; Jude 12.

sleight. The Greek word meant originally 'dice-playing,' hence 'trickery.' For the class of metaphor cf. Phil. ii. 30 and the note there.

wiles. The word so translated occurs only here and in vi. 11, but the meaning is clear enough from kindred forms of the same root.

15. speaking truth. This translation appears to limit too much the force of the Greek word, which refers rather to all conduct. The marginal rendering, 'dealing truly,' is therefore more satisfactory. Were a verbal form possible in English, 'truthing it in love' would be the equivalent. The words were the favourite motto of the late John Stuart Blackie, who used frequently to write them on the outside of envelopes in which he sent letters to his friends.

16. through . . . supplieth: the rendering of the margin 'through every joint of the supply' is the literal translation of the Greek words, and that rendered 'joint' really means 'contact.' In Col. ii. 19 the word is used in the plural. Here we may translate, 'through every contact with the supply.'

in due measure. The connexion of the words 'in measure' may be either with 'working,' or with the phrase, 'of each several part.' In the latter case, we must understand the meaning

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye 17
no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity
of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, 18
alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance

---

to be, 'commensurate with each several part,' but the preposition 'in' does not convey this sense. In the former case, the expression is modelled on that in verse 7, and the meaning is intelligible, 'according to the proportionate working.' The emphasis is laid on the energy of the living organism. The entire purpose of the words is to lay stress upon the growth of the whole, to which end the parts must be duly subordinated. The same mixing of metaphors has occurred in verse 12. For other instances see iii. 18 and Col. ii. 7. The word 'building' seems, to a great extent, to have ceased to suggest its primary meaning to the Apostle's mind.

iv. 17-32. '*The old order changeth.*'

The Apostle, in light of the great thoughts to which he has just given utterance, proceeds to urge upon his readers the kind of life incumbent upon them. It must be marked off from that of their heathen neighbours by a purity and beauty of holiness, to which those unillumined by the Divine Spirit are perfect strangers. Falsehood is to be exchanged for truth; anger and evil passion, for gentleness; dishonesty, for earnest labour that finds its reward in generosity. Their speech is to be cleansed for the sake of others as well as for themselves. Because the Holy Spirit possesses them they are to do His will, and display the gracious bearing that will mark them clearly as children of their Father in heaven.

17. This I say therefore. The subject of verses 1-3 of this chapter is now resumed. This verse puts negatively what was stated in a positive form in the first verse of the chapter.

testify: this is a strong word = 'protest.' The Apostle's urgent demand has not only Christ's authority behind it, but is an expression of that new life that all possess in him, and so is instinct with living truth.

as the Gentiles . . . walk. The A. V., following the received text, reads 'the other Gentiles,' but the best authorities are against the addition. It is more in accordance with the Apostle's fine inherent courtesy (see Philemon, pp. 154, 155) to assume the omission genuine. The readers are no longer Gentiles in the spiritual sense, but members with himself of the Divine commonwealth, and citizens of the great city (cf. Phil. i. 27).

the life of God: it is the new life in union with God of

that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart;
19 who being past feeling gave themselves up to lascivious-
20 ness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye
21 did not so learn Christ; if so be that ye heard him,

---

which the Apostle is here speaking. This was something quite inconceivable to the heathen.

because . . . heart. These two clauses have generally been taken as co-ordinate, but it seems to give a better sense if we regard the second as dependent on the first, 'because of the ignorance that is in them arising from the hardening of their heart.'

hardening: the A.V. translation 'blindness' arose from a misconception of the derivation of the Greek word. The root word meant originally 'volcanic rock,' and secondarily 'a hardening of the skin.' Hence the word used metaphorically denoted 'insensibility.'

19. being past feeling: this word keeps up the idea suggested by the metaphor of 'hardness' in the preceding verse. Another meaning is, however, sometimes found for the Greek word, viz. 'giving up in despair.' It is in that sense that the ordinary Latin version understands the word in this passage. The meaning of the text seems the one best authenticated.

to work. The marginal rendering 'to make a trade of' must not be understood literally, as if they actually made a trade of vice and received profit from it, but the word implies that they pursued it eagerly; cf. 'give diligence' in Luke xii. 58, where the same noun is employed.

greediness: marg. 'covetousness.' The word so rendered probably means something much stronger, perhaps 'excess' or 'immoderation.' From its close connexion in N.T. usage with words denoting sensual sin it seems almost necessary to assume that it has taken that special complexion in the Apostle's vocabulary. Cf. v. 5; Col. iii. 5; Rom. i. 29; 1 Thess. iv. 6.

20. so learn Christ. This is a phrase apparently coined by Paul, and is a fine and notable use of language. For similar usages cf. Phil. iii. 10; Col. ii. 6. The form of expression 'ye did not so learn' is that termed by the rhetoricians *litotes* ('plainness'), whereby the speaker uses a word or phrase less strong than the truth he means to convey, that he may emphasize his thought by the fact of the conscious contrast. Another scriptural instance is found in Deut. xviii. 14, 'but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do,' when the meaning is 'has strongly forbidden.' Paul's description of himself as 'a citizen of no mean city,' when he means to point to the great importance of Tarsus, is another instance.

and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: that 22
ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life,
the old man, which waxeth corrupt after the lusts of
deceit; and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your 23
mind, and put on the new man, which after God hath 24
been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth 25
each one with his neighbour: for we are members one

---

21. if so be: the use of this expression goes to strengthen the opinion that Paul is here writing to those who had not come under his personal influence.

in him: their Christian instruction had been conveyed to them in living fellowship with Christ.

as truth is in Jesus: this is a phrase often misquoted in the form, 'the truth *as it is* in Jesus.' The teaching they had received had been that given by the historical Jesus. His words and works had formed the basis of their spiritual instruction.

Another interpretation is adopted by some scholars, who take Christ to be the subject, and render, 'as he is truth in Jesus,' or, the word for 'truth' being in the oblique case, 'as he is in truth, in Jesus.' For the idea thus conveyed cf. Heb. xiii. 8. They are to see in the person of the historic Jesus, the eternal Christ.

22. put away. The 'putting away' (the metaphor is that of 'putting off' clothes) is represented as a single act, while in the following verses the 'being renewed' is described as a continuous process, while the 'putting on' is a single act.

23. the spirit of your mind: i. e. those inner and highest principles of the life that control conduct.

24. Cf. Col. iii. 10.

after God: i. e. according to the mind of God. Truth is here conceived as the atmosphere in which these virtues can alone attain their highest development.

in righteousness and holiness of truth. There is a twofold error in the rendering of the A.V. The words 'of truth' are connected only with 'holiness,' when they refer to righteousness as well, and they are made an adjective.

In verses 25-32 special sins are instanced in the case of which the principles here laid down are to be applied.

25. falsehood: the word is more general than 'lying,' and covers more than speech. Cf. Col. iii. 9, where the special charge is given.

for we are members one of another. The argument is

26 of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun
27 go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the
28 devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather
let him labour, working with his hands the thing that
is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that
29 hath need. Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your
mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may
30 be, that it may give grace to them that hear. And

---

based on the conception of perfect loyalty between each member of the Christian church.

26. Be ye angry, and sin not. The words are a quotation from Ps. iv. 4 (R. V. margin), and are taken from the Greek (LXX) version. The meaning is clearly that our anger, when just, is to be of such a kind as not to lead us into sin. 'Let the day of your anger be the day of your reconciliation' is the spirit of the precept. Plutarch tells us that the Pythagoreans, when they had given way to anger, and had used violent language to one another, were in the habit of shaking hands before sunset, and embracing one another in token of reconciliation. Fuller has a quaint remark: 'Let us not understand the Apostle so literally that we may take leave to be angry till sunset, then might our wrath lengthen with the days; and men in Greenland, where days last above a quarter of a year, have plentiful scope of revenge.' For the anger of Jesus see Mark iii. 5.

The word rendered **wrath** is more properly 'irritation'—a temporary feeling.

27. place: i. e. 'room to act'; cf. our nautical phrase 'sea-room.' This is the only place, outside the Pastoral Epistles, where Paul uses the word 'devil.'

29. corrupt. The word is used of 'a *worthless* tree' in Matt. vii. 17, xii. 33, and of fish in Matt. xiii. 48. Abbott thinks it may be taken as equivalent to our use of 'foul' in this connexion, as including 'scurrilous' language.

for edifying as the need may be. The A. V. rendering 'to the use of edifying' is quite a mistaken one. 'For the improvement of the occasion' is the sense the writer wishes to convey.

A few MSS. have the remarkable reading 'faith' instead of 'need,' i. e. 'for the building up of the faith.' This has no adequate authority.

that it may give grace. The meaning of the word 'grace' here may be simply 'benefit,' as in 2 Cor. i. 15, viii. 6, but the peculiar N. T. flavour of the word goes deeper.

grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were
sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, 31
and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and railing, be put
away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to 32
another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God
also in Christ forgave you.

Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; **5**

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30. The doctrine of the indwelling of the Spirit gives special point to the warning against sins of speech. 'The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart' (Rom. x. 8) may be used to illustrate the idea; cf. also Rom. viii. 11, 27, and Jas. iii. 1–12.

unto the day. The force of 'unto' is not 'until,' but 'with a view to.'

32. kind. The word so rendered occurs only here in all Paul's Epistles. It is used of God in Luke vi. 35, 'he is *kind* toward the unthankful and evil.'

forgiving each other. The pronoun in the original is a reflexive one, thus bringing out the oneness of the body corporate of the Christian community; cf. Col. iii. 13 and 1 Pet. iv. 8–10. The same reason for cherishing the spirit of forgiveness is adduced by Christ; cf. Matt. vi. 15, xviii. 35.

God . . . in Christ: God 'acting in Christ' forgave; cf. 2 Cor. v. 19 and Col. iii. 13.

forgave you. The margin reads 'us,' and there is a similar difference (with a transposition of the pronouns) in v. 2. The R. V. text follows, in both cases, the best MS. authority. In Col. iii. 13 the text has 'the Lord forgave,' with 'Christ' as the reading of the margin.

v. 1–14. '*Imitatio Dei.*'

The revealed purpose of God and the example of Jesus Christ are to be the rules of Christian conduct. Not only gross and open sin, but all questionable and foolish conduct is to be carefully avoided, and the note of grateful praise is to fill the whole life. The Christian must have no part with those who can have no interest in Christ. The division line should be clearly marked between the fruitful and gracious lives that are led by the Light of the world, and those unfruitful and unlovely souls who sit in darkness. But a further duty is imperative, even reproof of the deeds of shame, that they may be dragged to light, seen in their native hideousness, and so, mayhap, departed from, for the trumpet-call of the Spirit is 'Awake, Arise!'

1. therefore. The conjunction seems to link this verse closely

2 and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and
gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to
3 God for an odour of a sweet smell. But fornication,
and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be
4 named among you, as becometh saints; nor filthiness,
nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting:

---

to the one that immediately precedes it, the imitation inculcated being especially that of the grace of forgiveness, so that some continue the former paragraph to end of verse 2 of this chapter. This does not seem necessary, as there is undoubtedly a general reference also to the whole content of the preceding verses, and a very close connexion with all that follows, since the vices characterized are sins against love.

as beloved children. This is the highest incentive to imitation.

2. as Christ also loved you: see note on verse 32 above, and for the idea of the words cf. John xiii. 34; Gal. ii. 20, and verse 25 of this chapter.

for an odour of a sweet smell. The image is derived from the original idea of the Divinity rejoicing in the fragrance of the sacrifice. It is interesting to compare the other passages in which Paul uses the illustration of sacrifice, some of the most interesting of which occur within the limits of this volume. In Rom. xii. 1 he calls upon Christians to present their 'bodies a living sacrifice,' while in a later chapter of the same Epistle (xv. 16) he speaks of 'the offering up of the Gentiles,' evidently regarding his converts as his sacrifice to God. With this idea is closely connected the conception in Phil. ii. 17, where he represents the 'faith' of the Philippians as the sacrifice he presents. Once more, in Phil. iv. 18 their gifts sent to him are characterized as 'an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.'

3. covetousness: see iv. 19 and note. This verse is a strong additional testimony to the special significance the word seems to have acquired.

not even be named. The words of Herodotus about the Persians (i. 138) are often quoted in illustration: 'They are not allowed even to mention the things which it is not lawful for them to do'.(cf. verse 12).

4. jesting. The word has undoubtedly here a flavour of licentiousness. Aristotle uses it in his *Ethics* (iv. 14) as an equivalent for 'quick-witted,' from its original meaning of 'something easily turned,' but adds that, since the majority of people love excessive jesting, the word is apt to be degraded. Thus we

but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know of a 5
surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor
covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance
in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive 6
you with empty words: for because of these things
cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.
Be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were 7, 8
once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as
children of light (for the fruit of the light is in all good- 9
ness and righteousness and truth), proving what is well- 10
pleasing unto the Lord; and have no fellowship with 11
the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove

---

are prepared for its further deterioration in Paul's day. Trench notes a similar tendency in the English word 'facetious.'

5. which is an idolater: cf. iv. 19 and Col. iii. 5. It is only the attachment to the word of the wider and grosser sense noted above that makes the statement intelligible.

6. empty words: i.e. 'deceptive words'—words in which there is no inherent truth. The dangerous teaching evidently emanated from men associated with the Christian community. Such immoral teaching has always been and still is a serious menace to the safety of the church.

8. ye were once darkness. The emphasis is on the time past. Abbott quotes in illustration Virgil's pathetic line: 'Troy was once a city, and we Trojans once' (*Aen.* ii. 325). Darkness was their nature, and now the transformation is to be complete; cf. Matt. v. 14; Phil. ii. 15.

9. the fruit of the light. The expression is noteworthy and exceptional. 'Fruit of the spirit' is general in similar contexts, and is read, as we might expect, by many MSS. here. The idea of 'light,' however, dominates the passage.

10. proving . . . Lord: cf. Rom. xii. 2 (R. V. margin), 'proving the will of God, *even* the thing which is good and well-pleasing and perfect.'

11. have no fellowship with: cf. verse 7.

unfruitful. This is the natural characteristic of all evil.

reprove. The rendering 'convict' or 'bring to light' given in the margin seems the better one in view of what follows. We must speak of things in order to reprove them, and Paul does not shrink from doing so. But if we take the sense to be 'convict,' 'bring to the light,' we can understand his additional

12 them; for the things which are done by them in secret
13 it is a shame even to speak of. But all things when
they are reproved are made manifest by the light:
14 for everything that is made manifest is light. Where-
fore *he* saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from
the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.

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reason, for, since they are shameful even to speak of, it is worse to let them lurk there. John iii. 20, where the same word is used, is a most instructive parallel. 'For every one that doeth (practiseth) ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved (exposed), but he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God.' Cf. also 1 Cor. xiv. 24 (margin R. V.). The purpose of the exposure is therefore to turn darkness to light.

13. everything that is made manifest is light. This is an extremely difficult phrase to understand. To bring a dark thing to the light is not to make it light. If we can grammatically translate (with the A. V.) the words, 'whatever makes manifest is light' (as some scholars assert we can), then all difficulty vanishes, but this usage of the verb is not clearly proved. As it stands, the phrase can only be said to be a very general and inexact statement, the draft of which is clear from the context, but which will not bear the test of accurate analysis.

14. Wherefore he **saith**: cf. iv. 8 and note. If we translate thus we introduce a great difficulty, since no ingenuity can prove that the words thus introduced are a quotation from the O. T., or even from apocryphal writings. At most they can only be suggested by Isa. lx. 1, 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.' If, however, we render (as was suggested in the case of iv. 8) 'it says,' 'it is said,' or 'one says,' the quotation may easily be from some early Christian hymn. In the original the words have a distinctly rhythmical character. If this be so, the quotation may have suggested the reference that almost immediately follows (verse 19) to the service of praise. Many consider that 1 Tim. iii. 16 and other passages in the N. T. have a similar origin. See article 'Hymn' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible.* There is a curious reading found in one or two MSS. (the famous Codex Bezæ among them), 'and thou shalt touch Christ.' Jerome explains the reading by the legend that Adam was buried at Calvary, and that the cross was raised above his grave. Then was the prophecy fulfilled, 'Rise, Adam, who sleepest, and rise from

Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, 15
but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are 16
evil. Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what 17
the will of the Lord is. And be not drunken with wine, 18
wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking 19

---

the dead, and Christ shall touch thee,' the meaning being that the contact of Christ's body and blood will effect his sharing in the gift of eternal life. Jerome himself says this interpretation was given for the sake of affording a pleasing novelty to the people! The story may be the origin of the reading, and not vice versa.

v. 15-21. *The art of thankfulness.*

A scrupulous carefulness should mark their entire conduct, for the opportunities of life are precious, and the will of God should be their guide. The excesses of former days must be laid aside, and the more lasting and true joy of Christian fellowship take their place. The service of song that forms part of the united worship is to be an expression of the heart's devotion and gratitude, and to exert the reflex influence of subduing all selfishness.

15. Look therefore carefully. The word 'therefore' seems to refer back to the subject of verses 8-10.

carefully is correctly connected with 'look,' not with 'walk' (as A. V.).

16. redeeming the time. The translation in the margin, 'buying up the opportunity,' gives the correct idea. 'Making your market to the full from the opportunity of this life' is Prof. Ramsay's paraphrase (*St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 149), cf. Col. iv. 5. The best bargains come to the early and alert purchaser.

evil means 'morally evil,' not 'full of trouble' or 'days of peril.'

17. Wherefore: viz. because it is necessary to walk carefully.

foolish: i. e. 'imprudent,' continuing the idea of the former figure—that of a wise business man.

the will of the Lord: cf. verse 10.

18. And. The Greek conjunction is used in such a way here as to mark the transition from the general to the particular, as in Mark xvi. 7, 'Tell his disciples *and* Peter.'

riot is rendered better 'dissoluteness.' Aristotle (*Ethics*, iv. 1) defines such men as 'failing in self-control, and spending money on the unrestrained gratification of their passions.' It is the exact equivalent of our word 'lost,' in a moral sense.

one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;
20 giving thanks always for all things in the name of our
21 Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; subjecting
yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.

Drunkenness is loss. 'The word is one,' says Trench, 'in which heathen ethics said much more than they intended or knew.'

with the Spirit. The rendering of the text is the common one, and obviously refers to the Holy Spirit, but the reading of the margin, 'in Spirit,' demands attention. It signifies, 'let your desires be after spiritual and not carnal repletion.' The higher nature, not the lower, is to be satisfied. The latter rendering much more satisfactorily meets the demands of Greek grammar, and also seems to yield, at least, as satisfactory a sense as the ordinary interpretation.

19. one to another. The same word is used as in iv. 32, which is not so accurately rendered (by A. V. and R. V. margin) 'to yourselves.' It is a similar form that Pliny (*Epp.* x. 97) employs in his famous description of the Christian worship, 'they sing in turn one to another a song to Christ as God.'

psalms and hymns and spiritual songs: cf. Col. iii. 16, where the conjunctions are omitted. It is impossible to substantiate hard and fast distinctions between the meanings of the three words. They may be said to cover all sacred lyric poetry. Cf. Geo. Herbert, *A True Hymn*:—

> 'The fineness which a hymn or psalm affords,
> Is, when the soul unto the lines accords.'

Augustine's definition of a hymn is frequently quoted: 'It is a song with praise of God. If thou praisest God and singest not, thou utterest no hymn. If thou singest and praisest not God, thou utterest no hymn. A hymn, then, containeth these three things—song, and praise, and that of God' (*Comm. on Ps.*, 148).

20. in the name of: i. e. referring all its value to its relation to him.

21. subjecting. This word looks forward to, and, indeed, governs the next section. There is no Greek equivalent for the words 'be in subjection' in verse 22. The connexion with the thought of the passage immediately preceding is not to be sought in the word, but in the general advice as to mutual assistance, special instances of which are to follow.

In the *Dissertations* of Epictetus (iv. 7) we have words that strongly resemble these, 'Giving thanks to God for all things,

Wives, *be in subjection* unto your own husbands, as 22
unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the 23
wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, *being*
himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is 24
subject to Christ, so *let* the wives also *be* to their
husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, 25
even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself

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in nothing finding fault with the things that are not in one's own power.' Yet what a difference in motive and appeal is made by the introduction of the one name, Jesus!

v. 22–33. *Husbands, wives, and the church.*

The Apostle turns now to special applications of the principles he has been laying down, and first addresses the wives of the Christian community, bidding them see in their husbands the representatives of Christ, and regard themselves as standing in the same relation of dutiful subjection to their husbands as the church does to her Lord. Husbands, on the other hand, are to take Christ's gracious, gentle, and protective attitude towards his church as the model of their conduct towards their wives. As the church, for which Christ has suffered so much, is one with Christ in a mystic union, so are husbands and wives one flesh, and the one is the parable of the other, and both are profound and living realities of the Divine revelation. For the whole section cf. Col. iii. 18—iv. 1, and 1 Pet. ii. 18—iii. 7.

22. Wives, be in subjection. For the omission of the verb see note on verse 21.

your own. These words seem to be added to emphasize the peculiarly special nature of the relationship, and the personal possession it implies.

23. For the husband is the head of the wife. There is not adequate authority for the insertion of the definite article before 'husband,' nor is there one before 'head,' so the words are better rendered in the general form, 'For a husband is head of his wife.'

himself the saviour of the body. This shorter reading follows the better authorities (cf. A. V.). There is a similarity between the two relationships, but also a great difference. Christ is *Saviour* as well as *Head*.

24. But. The conjunction has, in all probability, the force of 'notwithstanding this difference in everything.' These words of course imply the limitation that the things are within the province of Christian obedience.

25. Chrysostom's comment on these verses is well worth

26 up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it
27 by the washing of water with the word, that he might
present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not
having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it
28 should be holy and without blemish. Even so ought
husbands also to love their own wives as their own

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attention:—'Hast thou seen the meaning of obedience? hear also the measure of love. Wouldst thou that thy wife should obey thee as the church doth Christ? have care thyself for her, as Christ for the church; and if it should be needful that thou shouldst give thy life for her, or be cut to pieces a thousand times, or endure anything whatever, refuse it not; yea, if thou hast suffered this, thou hast not done what Christ did, for thou doest this for one to whom thou wert already united, but he for her who rejected him and hated him. . . . He brought her to his feet by his great care, not by threats nor fear nor any such thing; so do thou conduct thyself toward thy wife.'

26. might sanctify . . . having cleansed. The cleansing is the process preparatory to the sanctifying that follows; cf. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

by the washing: *lit.* 'by the bath,' a reference to baptism, with a probable allusion to the ceremonial bath of the bride before marriage.

with the word. Moule paraphrases well, 'attended by, or conditioned by, an utterance.' 'Word' is to be taken in the most general sense as equivalent to 'teaching,' and must not be limited to the baptismal formula, or to any other definite body of doctrine. The general idea is made clear by our Lord's saying recorded in John xv. 3, 'Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.'

27. Cf. 2 Cor. xi. 2.

The **it** of the A. V. arises from a mistaken reading found in some MSS. The meaning is more clearly brought out by rendering, 'that he might present the church to himself, glorious.'

28. as their own bodies. Husbands are to regard their wives as being their own bodies, as Christ looks upon the church as his body. The idea is not that men are to love their wives as they love their own bodies, which is either feeble, derogatory to the wife's position, or both. The words of Plutarch have been quoted in this connexion: 'The husband ought to rule his wife, not as a master does a chattel, but as the soul governs the body, by sympathy and good-will. As he ought to govern the body by not being a slave to its pleasures and desires, so he ought

bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself:
for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth 29
and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church;
because we are members of his body. For this cause 30, 31
shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall
cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one

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to rule his wife by cheerfulness and complaisance' (*Conjugal Precepts*, p. 78, Bohn's Library).

He that loveth his own wife loveth himself. This has been said to be nothing more than a special application of the natural instinct of self-love. But such a statement cannot be maintained, nor, were it a fact, would Paul require to enforce this precept as a duty.

29. his own flesh: cf. 'one flesh,' verse 31.

30. of his body. The addition in the A. V. of the words 'of his flesh and of his bones' has not the best of MS. authority, though it has the majority on its side, and on internal grounds is improbable, as not adding anything to the conception, but rather introducing a difficulty without affording any compensating advantage. There is no proof that the words were a common formula. Had the words been 'of his flesh and of his blood,' we might have supposed a reference to the Lord's Supper, but the form of expression as it stands makes this impossible. The reason of their addition seems to have been a reminiscence of Gen. ii. 23 and 24, the last words of which are quoted in the next verse, 'And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.' Their insertion, and the attempt to expound them, have driven some to the conclusion that the writer had no definite idea himself what he did mean!

31. For this cause: viz. because a man is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. One recent commentator (von Soden), however, understands it differently, and renders, 'instead of this,' i. e. 'instead of hating his own flesh (verse 29) . . . he shall cleave to his wife.'

shall a man leave . . . flesh. The quotation is from Gen. ii. 24, which is also quoted in Matt. xix. 5 and Mark x. 7, 8.

It seems a strange perversity of the commentators, so many of whom insist on interpreting this verse of Christ and the church. The image would be most strained, and in the most extravagant mood of mysticism. Neither is such language in the manner of Paul. The natural sense is both clear and appropriate. For a modern setting of the idea compare Tennyson's lines:—

32 flesh. This mystery is great: but I speak in regard
33 of Christ and of the church. Nevertheless do ye also
severally love each one his own wife even as himself;
and *let* the wife *see* that she fear her husband.
6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is

'O happy he, and fit to live,
On whom a happy home has power;
To make him trust his life, and give
His fealty to the halcyon hour.'

32. mystery. On this word see note on i. 9. With Paul it is 'a mystery revealed.' The A.V. rendering, 'this is a great mystery,' is incorrect, but the R.V. rendering, though correct grammatically, does not convey the true idea. The meaning to be attached to the word is that of 'important.' The words convey an idea of this sort: 'This spiritual teaching is vital.' The reference seems clearly to be to the whole comparison instituted between husband and wife, and Christ and the church.

I speak has the force, common in Paul's writings, of 'I mean.'

The Latin version (the Vulgate) renders the word translated 'mystery' by *sacramentum*, which, doubtless, originated the designation of marriage as a sacrament in the church of Rome.

33. Nevertheless: i. e. to return to the practical point at issue.

also, dropped by the A.V., is an important word, as it implies a reference to the example of Christ, on which Paul has been insisting.

fear. The rendering 'reverence' (A.V.) gives the proper colour to the word. The fear is not to be that of a slave, but such as befits a woman. The ideal is the poet's:

'Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men:
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm:
Then springs the crowning race of humankind.'
Tennyson, *The Princess*.

vi. 1-4. *The duty of parents and children.*

The primary duty of children is obedience, and this also is the path of promise. To make it easy, fathers are to forbear from provocation, and let their training be a model of the Divine methods.

1. in the Lord. These words suggest the spirit in which the obedience is to be rendered; cf. Col. iii. 20.

right. Honour thy father and mother (which is the first 2
commandment with promise), that it may be well with 3
thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye 4
fathers, provoke not your children to wrath : but nurture
them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

Servants, be obedient unto them that according to 5

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for this is right. The right is twofold : (1) from the natural relationship, (2) from the requirements of the Divine law.

2. the first commandment. There is some difficulty in seeing the appropriateness of the word 'first.' There is an implied promise attached to the second commandment, viz. 'shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.' It is not satisfactory to explain this as being the first commandment of the second table. As a matter of fact, according to the Jewish arrangement, it was not so. Some explain it as being the first to be learned by children. The most satisfactory explanation is to say that the words attached to the second commandment were regarded as descriptive of God's nature, and not as a definite promise.

But this explanation raises the further difficulty that it would then have been true to say, 'it is the only commandment with promise'—a stronger incentive still. Why first? are we driven to the explanation of its being the first to be learned? In this case one might place a comma after 'commandment,' render 'with a promise,' and paraphrase as follows—'Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment thou hast learned, and that too has a promise attached to it.' The original is to be found in Exod. xx. 12.

4. provoke not: cf. Col. iii. 21, where a different word is used, signifying 'do not irritate.'

vi. 5-9. *The duty of masters and slaves.*

The slaves, who formed so large a section of the early Christian church, are now bidden render the most implicit obedience to their overlord, reckoning all such service as done to Christ. The worthy slave is a man whose bondage is of the heart, whose will is enslaved to Christ, even if he chance to be a freeman. He is serving a Master, who will not fail to give a generous recompense. Masters are reminded of their relation of subjection, in turn, to a heavenly Master, who knows no respect of persons, and are therefore counselled to avoid a haughty and tyrannous bearing toward their underlings.

For this whole section cf. the Epistle to Philemon, which is a practical example of putting in practice the spirit it inculcates.

the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in
6 singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not in the way
of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ,
7 doing the will of God from the heart; with good will
doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men:
8 knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth,
the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether
9 *he be* bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things
unto them, and forbear threatening: knowing that both
their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no
respect of persons with him.
10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength

It is noteworthy that in each of the three classes here dealt with, Paul rises from the lower to the higher in the twofold relationship in each case—wives and husbands, children and fathers, servants and masters. The same order is found in the parallel passage in Col. iii. 18—iv. 1.

5. with fear and trembling. This does not imply harsh treatment, but solicitude in service; cf. 1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. vii. 15; Phil. ii. 12.

6. eyeservice. The word is only found again in Col. iii. 22. It may have been coined by Paul, though, of course, it may have been frequent in the common speech.

doing the will of God. This is a distinct characteristic, and is not to be taken as if it were 'servants who are doing the will of God.'

from the heart. This may belong either to this verse or the next. The majority of the best authorities deem the latter connexion the better one, 'serving heartily and willingly' denoting the spirit in which the servant regards (1) his task, and (2) his master.

vi. 10-17. *The Christian armour.*

As a closing exhortation, the Apostle bids his readers prepare for the strife that continually awaits them, and to endue themselves with the spiritual armour God has prepared for them. With truth as a girdle, righteousness as a breastplate, readiness as sandals, faith as a shield, salvation as a helmet, their defensive armour will be ample; while with the sword of the Spirit and the weapon of 'all-prayer' they will have enough wherewith to fight.

10. Finally: or, as the margin has it, 'From henceforth,' for

of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that 11
ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but 12

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both readings exist in the MSS. That of the text is the better attested and more probable; cf. Phil. iii. 1, iv. 8; 2 Thess. iii. 1. The A.V., following the traditional text, adds 'my brethren.' The addition has probably arisen from assimilation to parallel passages, e.g. Phil. iii. 1 and iv. 8.

be strong. The rendering of the margin, 'be made powerful,' accurately represents the force of the original.

the strength of his might: cf. i. 19. Not to be taken as = 'his strong might.'

11. the whole armour. The original word is 'panoply' (cf. Luke xi. 22, where it is also used). Wesley's well-known hymn, founded on this passage, has the original word :—

'Stand then in his great might,
With all his strength endued,
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God.'

The point insisted on is the completeness of the armour (*pan* = 'all'). Polybius enumerates the portions of the Roman soldier's panoply as shield, sword, greaves, spear, breastplate, helmet. Paul omits the spear, but names girdle and shoes, which, though not strictly armour, were essentials in the equipment.

to stand against = 'to hold your ground.'

wiles. The word in the original is that from which our 'method' is derived, and it signifies 'the planned and deliberate attacks.'

12. our. A few MSS. have 'your'—a change that would readily occur to a copyist, from the context, but to have written 'our' is much more like Paul, who loved to identify himself with those to whom he was writing, especially in circumstances of difficulty.

wrestling. It has been noted that this word, save in a general sense, is not the most suitable to the military metaphor employed. But for the moment the writer has turned to consider what the struggle is *not*, and in the immediate connexion of 'flesh and blood' it is most appropriate. Again the idea is carefully preserved in Wesley's fine paraphrase :—

'From strength to strength go on,
Wrestle, and fight, and pray,
Tread all the powers of darkness down,
And win the well-fought day.'

against the principalities, against the powers, against the
world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *hosts*
13 of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Wherefore take
up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to
withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.
14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth,

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flesh and blood. In the original the peculiar order of the words 'blood and flesh' is found only in this passage.

world-rulers has the widest possible reference, and seems to denote the spirits of evil.

of this darkness. The A. V. follows the common text in adding 'of this world,' which is probably an early gloss that had crept into the text.

the spiritual hosts. In the original the word is the neuter plural of the adj. 'spiritual,' and it seems very uncertain whether it may be rendered 'hosts.' A more general term, such as 'forces' or 'elements,' is more accurate.

in the heavenly places. Here we have the same grammatical form. The phrase is probably to be explained by current speculations about the heavenly regions, in some sections of which the presence of evil spirits was recognized. The emphasis seems to be placed on the might of the forces arrayed against us.

It has been pointed out that the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, which was written perhaps as early as 30 B.C., has several close resemblances with Paul's theories about the heavenly regions, e.g. paradise is in the third heaven, as in 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, and the presence of evil, as in this passage, in some parts of the heavens is recognized; cf. iii. 10, iv. 10.

13. For the whole of this passage the reader should compare Bunyan's magnificent description, founded upon it, of Christian's armour and his fight with Appolyon. In particular, note how he introduces the weapon of 'all-prayer' (see verse 18). The sketches for the present finished picture are to be found in Rom. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. vi. 7; and 1 Thess. v. 8.

in the evil day: i. e. the day when you are hard pressed—not with any reference to a particular day.

having done all, to stand = 'that, having done your duty to the best of your ability, you may be able to hold your ground.'

14. Stand therefore. In this case the word is simply descriptive of the attitude of the warrior about to be armed.

with truth. This is to be taken as referring to truth 'in its widest sense as an element of character' (Abbott); cf. v. 9.

and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and 15
having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel
of peace; withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith 16
ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil
one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword 17
of the Spirit, which is the word of God: with all prayer 18

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the breastplate of righteousness: cf. v. 9. In the imagery of the breastplate and helmet Paul follows Isa. lix. 17, 'and he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head.' Another interesting parallel is to be found in the Book of Wisdom v. 17–20:

> 'He shall take his jealousy as a panoply,
> He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate,
> He shall take holiness as an invincible shield,
> And he shall sharpen stern wrath for a sword.'

15. preparation signifies 'readiness'; see a magnificent sermon by Paget in the volume entitled *Faculties and Difficulties for Belief and Disbelief*, p. 149, where the full force of this grace is brought out.

16. withal. Another reading is that rendered by the A. V. 'above all.' This, however, is a mistranslation of the words read, which should be rendered, 'in addition to all.' The reading of the R. V. text is, however, the best authenticated. A similar difference is found in Luke xvi. 26.

the shield of faith. The word signifies a large oblong shield, measuring about 4 ft. × 2½. In 1 Thess. v. 8 'faith and love' are the breastplate 'to quench all the fiery darts.' Thucydides, in the famous description of the siege of Platæa, tells us how the defenders protected the face of their wooden palisades with raw hides and dressed skins, against the fire arrows tipped with lighted tow. The skin-shields served a similar purpose.

vi. 18–20. *Exhortation to prayer and intercession.*

The Apostle, dropping metaphor, passes into an exhortation to prayer, watchfulness, and intercession, in particular for himself and his mission, that the courage to which he has been inciting them may not be lacking in his own case.

18. all prayer: i. e. prayer of every form. Abbott would connect these words immediately with the main imperative, 'stand therefore,' and this gives them a clearer import than the connexion generally understood with 'take.' This attitude of prayer is to be a constant one, and, as Bunyan's spiritual insight saw, an essential element in the warfare, invincible when all else failed.

and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and
watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication
19 for all the saints, and on my behalf, that utterance may
be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known
20 with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am
an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly,
as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do,
Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in

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in the Spirit: cf. Jude 20; Rom. viii. 26.

watching thereunto: cf. Col. iv. 2.

19. in opening my mouth. This expression is employed only in circumstances of great seriousness and importance, and is here to be understood rather of God's part in giving the Apostle a message than merely as a synonym for speech; cf. Col. iv. 3, where the reference is explicit.

with boldness. The A. V. and R. V. margin connect these words with the preceding, which is not so satisfactory a rendering, as it is tantamount to the statement of verse 20.

20. that in it I may speak boldly. Von Soden makes these words not dependent on 'praying,' as the great majority of interpreters do, but on the words, 'for which I am an ambassador,' understanding that Paul might have been set at liberty had he chosen to cease from preaching, but that he elected to remain a captive in hope that the result of his trial would be to grant him liberty to preach. This interpretation seems rather imaginary.

vi. 21, 22. *Commendation of Tychicus.*

In the meantime the Apostle sends Tychicus as the bearer of his letter, and also to convey verbal messages as to the Apostle's affairs, and personally to encourage the churches.

21. also = 'as well as others.' Not to be confined to, or indeed specially referred to, the Colossians.

Tychicus. In Acts xx. 4 we read of him as accompanying Paul from Macedonia to Asia, and he may, as Lightfoot thinks, have gone with him to Jerusalem. This passage shews he had found his way to Rome, and, in company with Onesimus, is sent, as the bearer of a circular letter and other communications, to the churches of the Lycus Valley. Again, towards the close of the Apostle's life, he is named as a probable messenger to Crete, and as having been actually sent to Ephesus (cf. Titus iii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 12). In Col. iv. 7 he is described, in addition to the title here given, as a 'fellow-servant' of the Apostle. The name is proved,

the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom 22
I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye
may know our state, and that he may comfort your
hearts.

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from 23
God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace 24
be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in
uncorruptness.

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by the evidence of inscriptions, not to have been an uncommon one.

vi. 23, 24. *Parting benediction.*

This differs in form from Paul's other benedictions in three particulars:—

(1) It is written in the third person, and thus made more general, as would suit a circular letter.

(2) It consists of two distinct parts.

(3) The usual order of 'grace' and 'peace' is reversed.

These considerations tend to confirm the genuineness of the Epistle, as no imitator would have dreamed of diverging from the Apostle's general custom.

24. uncorruptness. This is a very fine and appropriate word with which to close a letter, which began (i. 4) with a description of the calling of Christians as being one of 'holiness and without blemish in love.' Alford says: 'It is a spiritual, eternal love, and thus only is the word worthy to stand as the crown and climax of this glorious Epistle.'

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

COLOSSIANS

1 PAUL, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of
2 God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful
brethren in Christ *which are* at Colossæ: Grace to you
and peace from God our Father.

3 We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus
4 Christ, praying always for you, having heard of your
faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have
5 toward all the saints, because of the hope which is laid

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i. 1, 2. *Opening salutation from Paul and Timothy.*

1. Timothy's name is associated with Paul's in 2 Corinthians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon, but in Philippians and Philemon Paul proceeds in the singular, not as here and in the other cases in the plural.

2. The form of address **to the saints and . . . brethren** is similar to that used in Romans and Ephesians. In other Epistles the word 'church,' or (as in Philippians) a form that implies it, is employed. It may be that this more personal form is used expressly to denote his kindly feeling of Christian love towards churches in which he is not personally known.

Only here does the name of the Father stand alone in the opening benediction of Paul's Epistles.

i. 3–8. *Thanksgiving for faithful following of the gospel.*

Thanksgiving is united with prayer. The thankfulness springs from the report given by Epaphras of their faith and love, the proof of their hope in the gospel, which is shewing itself to be a mighty power everywhere.

3. praying always. It seems better to connect 'always' with 'give thanks,' as in Eph. i. 16 the Apostle tells us is his practice.

up for you in the heavens, whereof ye heard before in
the word of the truth of the gospel, which is come unto 6
you; even as it is also in all the world bearing fruit
and increasing, as *it doth* in you also, since the day ye
heard and knew the grace of God in truth; even as ye 7
learned of Epaphras our beloved fellow-servant, who is
a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, who also 8
declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

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5. A question arises as to whether **because of the hope** is dependent on the words which immediately precede it, or is to be taken with 'We give thanks.' The arguments in defence of either view need not be given here, as some of them involve technical questions of Greek grammar, but suffice it to say that the latter view accords best with the general sense of the passage and with Paul's usage, while there is no valid reason on linguistic grounds against it. The thanks of the Apostle have a justifiable basis in the grandeur of the future that opens out before these Colossians, and in their firm grasp of all that hope involves.

laid up for you: cf. 1 Pet. i. 4, 'an inheritance . . . reserved in heaven for you.' The only other Pauline phrase that approaches it is 1 Tim. vi. 19.

ye heard before, &c. These words have, apparently, a reference to the accurate teaching they had received before the false teachers came among them; cf. verse 23 and ii. 5, 6.

6. in all the world. Hereby 'the catholicity of the true gospel' is contrasted with 'the merely local character of false gospels.'

bearing fruit and increasing. These words denote inward and outward growth respectively.

in truth: i. e. 'in its genuine simplicity,' not as adulterated by false teachers.

7. Epaphras: see note on iv. 12.

fellow-servant. The same title is given to Tychicus in iv. 7.

on our behalf. This means that Epaphras had acted as Paul's representative in introducing the gospel to Colossæ, and so clothes him with all the authority of the Apostle. But many authorities read 'your,' and the evidence both of MSS. and editors is about equally balanced. If we judge by what was probably the Apostle's meaning, the reading of the text seems preferable to that of the margin, as it is in better agreement with the line of his argument, and the change from 'our' to 'your' on the part of a copyist is more easily understood than the reverse.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray and make request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual
10 wisdom and understanding, to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and
11 increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all
12 patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks unto

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i. 9–23. The Glory of Christ.

i. 9–11 (*a*). *A prayer for increasing knowledge and power.*

9. For this cause refers to the whole substance of the preceding paragraph; cf. Eph. i. 15.

since the day. The Apostle's prayer is 'an echo of their faith' recorded in verse 6.

do not cease to pray. Ellicott calls this 'an affectionate hyperbole'; cf. Eph. i. 16.

10. unto all pleasing: i.e. 'pleasing God in every way.'

in the knowledge. The majority of the best interpreters follow the marginal reading 'by,' the knowledge of God being the source of the fruitfulness and growth. To read 'in' rather repeats the statement of verse 9.

11. The difference of translation between '**with**' and '**in** all power' may seem very slight, but the second seems preferable as bringing the phrase into line with the former 'in all wisdom' and 'in every good work,' and also because 'in the matter of all strength' gives a more definite meaning than 'with every form of strength.'

patience: 'endurance' is a much better rendering of the original. Thus the 'endurance' of Job much better describes the character of the hero of that poem than does the word 'patience' as we understand it, to which the word rendered 'longsuffering' much more nearly corresponds.

with joy: see note under verse 12.

i. 12–17 (*b*). *Thanksgiving to God for His salvation in Christ.* An outpouring of praise to God because He has delivered us and made us inheritors of His Son's kingdom—that Son who is His own perfect revelation to the world, and in whom the whole universe finds its unity.

12. with joy is in the R.V. text and by the majority of editors joined with the preceding verse, on the ground that 'giving thanks' implies joy, and that 'joyful endurance' is the point of the preceding phrase, in proof of which verse 24 of this chapter,

the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the
inheritance of the saints in light; who delivered us out 13
of the power of darkness, and translated us into the
kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our 14
redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: who is the 15
image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;

Jas. i. 2, 3, and 1 Pet. iv. 13 are quoted. Such a verse as iii. 17 of the present Epistle shews that thanksgiving need not always be emphatically joyful, but here that seems to be the note the writer is anxious to strike, hence the emphatic position of the words, as defining the kind of thanksgiving—it is radiant.

made us meet = 'qualified us,' as in 2 Cor. iii. 6, the only other place where the word occurs.

Some few MSS. read 'called,' which in Greek closely resembles the other word, and as being much more familiar would be easily put in its place.

'You' instead of 'us' is read by many, but 'us' seems more natural in view of the whole trend of the following passage; 'you,' however, suits better the preceding passage, if the transition be not made till the next verse, but if we are right in beginning this section of the paragraph with this verse, 'us' seems what we should expect. It must be admitted, on the other hand, that 'us' would be more likely to be written by a careless copyist than 'you.' Cf. the similar uncertainty in Eph. iv. 32 and v. 2.

the inheritance. The metaphor is no doubt taken from the promised land as the allotted inheritance of the children of Israel. The phrase is parallel in thought to that in verse 5, 'the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens,' and for idea and language Lightfoot bids us compare Acts xxvi. 18.

13. translated. Almost all commentators note that the word is used of the deportation of whole peoples from one district to another.

Son of his love: best understood as = 'His beloved Son'; cf. Eph. i. 6, 'the Beloved.'

14. the forgiveness of our sins. This is the only place in Paul's letters where this exact phrase occurs, though one finds it in his speeches in Acts xiii. 38, xxvi. 18. We have an equivalent phrase in Eph. i. 7. It has been thought that here the exact definition of 'redemption' is given to correct the erroneous views of false teachers, since it is known that the later heretics laid stress on their theories of redemption.

15. image. The word denotes 'resemblance in some essential character.' In the Book of Wisd. of Sol. vii. 26, Wisdom (personified)

16 for in him were all things created, in the heavens and
upon the earth, things visible and things invisible,
whether thrones or dominions or principalities or
powers; all things have been created through him, and
17 unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all

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is described as 'an image of God's goodness,' and Paul uses it of Christ, 'who is the image of God,' in 2 Cor. iv. 4.

the firstborn seems to have been a recognized title of the Messiah; cf. Heb. i. 6, 'when he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world.' The source of the name is, by some, found in Ps. lxxxix. 27, 'I also will make him my firstborn.' 'The only ideas involved are,' says Abbott, 'priority in time and distinction from' the rest of creation. For the theological significance of the words here used the exhaustive note in Lightfoot should be consulted. The unique supremacy of Christ herein stated was another point denied by the false teachers.

creation has three meanings in the N. T.:—

(1) The act of creation as in Rom. i. 20, 'the creation of the world.'

(2) 'Creation' as an equivalent for the created universe; cf. Rom. viii. 22, 'the whole creation groaneth.'

(3) 'A creation,' i. e. a single creature; cf. Rom. viii. 39 'any other creature.' The R. V. here takes the second meaning and the A. V. the third, and interpreters are very much divided as to which is correct. The usage of the Greek rather points to the A. V. as being right here.

16. Christ holds the same place in the universe that he holds in the church; see verse 19 below.

visible and . . . invisible. This is a common division with Plato, as e. g. in the *Phaedo* (79 A).

thrones, &c. Cf. Eph. i. 21, where, however, both order and names are different, shewing that Paul is simply adopting current theories, as if he is indifferent as to what things are named, knowing that all possible existences are included. Lightfoot gives the Jewish and Christian speculations on the angelic hierarchies in his *Commentary*, p. 151; see also Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. 'Angels,' and those on the words in this verse.

through him, and unto him. Christ is both the medium and the end, as Revelation speaks of him as (xxii. 13) 'the Alpha and the Omega . . . the beginning and the end.' Cf. Stephen Phillips' fine lines:—

> 'Thou at whose whisper Death idled and grieved,
> And knew the voice at which creation shone
> Suddenly.'

things consist. And he is the head of the body, the 18
church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the
dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.
For it was the good pleasure *of the Father* that in him 19
should all the fulness dwell; and through him to 20
reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace
through the blood of his cross; through him, *I say*,
whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.
And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in 21

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i. 18–20 (*c*). *Christ's pre-eminence in the church.*

Christ is head of the church, since through his resurrection he is the firstborn also of the new creation, so that all who are reconciled, even if heavenly beings, are reconciled through him.

19. Though most interpreters follow the reading of the text in this verse, I think Abbott makes it clear that the usage of the language points to the rendering of the margin ('For the whole fulness of God was pleased to dwell in him') as the correct one. Doctrinally the passage is very important, and should be taken, along with Phil. ii. 5–8, as supplementary to the truths therein stated.

20. unto himself, or 'him,' as in the margin. The entire usage of language points to 'him,' i. e. 'Christ,' as being the meaning. Many interpreters, however, say that nowhere do we read of reconciliation to Christ, but always to God, therefore it must be 'to himself' here. But what if this passage be the one exception? There are peculiarities in the original here that have no exact parallels. It is not safe, at all events, to decide such a question by theological presuppositions, and the interpretation must be left open. It is such passages, no doubt, that suggested Tennyson's famous lines:—

'The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?'
In Memoriam lv.

through him is repeated for emphasis, as shewing there is no other form of mediation. The whole language is framed to make clear the uniqueness and universality of Christ's redemption.

i. 21–23 (*d*). *The Colossians' share in the results of this great work.*

The Colossians too, who had once been in dark enmity, have

your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled
22 in the body of his flesh through death, to present you
holy and without blemish and unreproveable before
23 him: if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded
and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the
gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all
creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a
minister.

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill
up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of

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been reconciled through his death, and may attain the full fruit of this through a life of holy and steadfast faith.

21. hath he reconciled. The rendering given in the margin ('ye have been reconciled') is read by only one great MS.—the Codex Bezæ at Cambridge, which is famous for extraordinary readings. Here, however, great authorities follow it, mainly because it seems difficult to understand how such a reading could have been accidentally introduced. Whichever reading is adopted, the construction of the sentence seems to have been begun in one way and finished in another—a custom that was not at all unusual with the Apostle.

22. in the body of his flesh. These words are probably designed clearly to express and emphasize the reality of Christ's earthly life.

to present, &c.: cf. Eph. v. 27 and Jude 24.

i. 24–29. *Paul's sufferings and mission as a minister of Jesus Christ.*

'Ay, for this Paul, a scorn and a reviling,
Weak as you know him and the wretch you see—
Even in these eyes shall ye behold his smiling,
Strength in infirmities and Christ in me.'

Myers' *St. Paul.*

24. As a prisoner, no less than as an active missionary, he experiences the joy of Christ's service.

for your sake: as they are part of the Gentile church he includes them, though not personally known to him.

that which is lacking is, in the original, 'the points which are lacking,' so that the afflictions of Christ are not regarded as one definite unity, of which a part is lacking, but as a series to which there may easily be supplementary ones.

the afflictions of Christ is a phrase that has been interpreted in many ways:—

Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the
church; whereof I was made a minister, according to 25
the dispensation of God which was given me to you-ward,
to fulfil the word of God, *even* the mystery which hath 26
been hid from all ages and generations: but now hath
it been manifested to his saints, to whom God was 27
pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of
this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you,
the hope of glory: whom we proclaim, admonishing 28
every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that

---

(1) As 'the afflictions which Christ endured,' either in the Roman Catholic sense of the meritorious suffering of the saints, or, with a large number of Protestant commentators, of the self-denial of Christ's faithful followers. This latter explanation does not give any adequate explanation of *how* these are 'the afflictions which Christ endured.'

(2) Those who understand the reference to be to 'the afflictions of Christ' *in* and *through* his church, which is his body.

(3) Those who understand the phrase of the Apostle's own afflictions, and compare for illustration his expressions, 'the sufferings of Christ abound unto us' (2 Cor. i. 5); 'always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus' (iv. 10), and 'the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death' (Phil. iii. 10).

The last interpretation seems the simplest, and may be illuminated by such a saying as that of our Lord, when taken in its connexion, 'My cup indeed ye shall drink' (Matt. xx. 23), cf. also Myers' *St. Paul*:—

> 'Thou in their woe thine agony completest,
> Christ, and their solitude is nigh to thee.'

25. dispensation: 'stewardship' (marg.) is the better rendering; it is the office of the steward that is here meant; cf. 1 Cor. ix. 17, 'I have a stewardship intrusted to me.'

to fulfil the word of God: i. e. to carry out the full programme of the heralding of the gospel—to make it open to the Gentiles.

27. in you: either 'within' or 'among'; cf. Luke xvii. 21, 'the kingdom of God is within you,' marg. 'in the midst of you.'

28. every man. Note the threefold repetition of the words, shewing the gospel message not to be in any sense an exclusive one.

in all wisdom = 'wisely.'

29 we may present every man perfect in Christ; whereunto I labour also, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

2 For I would have you know how greatly I strive for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have
2 not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, that they
3 may know the mystery of God, *even* Christ, in whom are

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perfect has reference to the 'maturity of faith'; cf. iv. 12; Eph. iv. 13, and Phil. iii. 15.

29. Cf. Myers' *St. Paul*:—

Then with a rush the intolerable craving
  Shivers throughout me like a trumpet-call,
Oh to save these! to perish for their saving,
  Die for their life, be offered for them all!'

ii. 1–5. *The Apostle's constant solicitude for the churches he has not seen.*

He does not wish the churches which he has not himself visited to feel he cares less for them than for others, but their growth in grace and Christian bearing rejoice his heart continually and nerve him to more earnest prayer on their behalf.

1. as many as probably refers to the church at Hierapolis, which, indeed, a few MSS. name here, clearly introducing the words from iv. 13, they being probably added in the first instance as an explanatory marginal note.

2. comforted = 'strengthened,' as it was used in old English, e. g. in Wycliffe's version we read: 'And the child waxed, and was comforted in spirit' (Luke i. 80), and in Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ii. 6. 5, 'Live a little; comfort a little; cheer thyself a little.'

knit together in love: cf. iii. 14.

of God, even Christ. The reading of the words so rendered varies in the original MSS. very considerably. Some read only 'of God,' others (the best) 'of God the Father,' and some have combinations and variations of these. Those that read as in the text, from which the R. V. is taken, can be understood in three ways. There is no word for 'even,' as the italics indicate, so we might render (1) 'of the God Christ,' (2) 'of the God of Christ,' or (3), as here, 'the mystery of God,' i. e. 'Christ.' Had we sufficient authority for the shortest reading, 'of God,' it would be the most

all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.
This I say, that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech. 4
For though I am absent in the flesh, 5
yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* 6

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simple. As it stands, the rendering of the text seems the best possible, though the expression is awkward, and there is probably some early corruption we cannot, with our present knowledge, correct.

3. in whom may very probably be rendered 'in which,' viz. 'the mystery.'

wisdom and knowledge: cf. Rom. xi. 33. While not treating them as strictly exegetical, we may with interest compare the lines of our own poets—Cowper's *Task*, vi. 88–99:—

> 'Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
> . . . .
> Have oft-times no connexion.
> Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much
> Wisdom is humble that he knows no more';

and Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*:—

> 'Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers';

and again *In Memoriam*, cxiv:—

> 'Who loves not Knowledge? . . .
> . . .Let her know her place;
> She is the second, not the first, . . .
> For she is earthly of the mind,
> But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.'

We must beware, however, of reading these modern distinctions into the thought of Paul.

4. delude: from the original comes the Greek word for a 'fallacy.'

5. order, and . . . stedfastness. The majority of interpreters regard these words as military metaphors, but it has been pointed out (by Abbott) that neither word bears such a complexion in itself, and that its ordinary meaning suffices here, since there is nothing in the context to suggest a military idea. The idea would then be that of a well-ordered state or household, and the stability of a well-built structure, which is as fine and appropriate a conception. Paul, as is his manner, praises the church in every respect in which he possibly can do so truthfully.

ii. 6–15. *An exhortation to steadfast loyalty to Christ.*

The only source of their salvation. They are to grow in likeness

7 walk in him, rooted and builded up in him, and stablished in your faith, even as ye were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

8 Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world,
9 and not after Christ: for in him dwelleth all the fulness
10 of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who
11 is the head of all principality and power: in whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the

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to Christ, living in a spirit of joyful gratitude, and not turning aside after false teachers, who would once again enchain Christ's freemen in the bondage of ceremonies, from which he had once for all delivered them. All bondage and death Christ has banished, and over every spiritual enemy he has openly triumphed like a glorious conqueror.

8. philosophy. This is the only occurrence of the word in the N. T. and is doubtless used as re-echoing the claim made by the false teachers. It has here a scornful ring, because they are abusing a thing in itself good. By throwing a scornful emphasis on the 'his' we may catch the meaning.

tradition: this points to the system of these teachers being a secret one confined to their sect. 'Tradition' was a technical term of the later Jewish mystical theology.

rudiments of the world: rudiments is 'elements,' *lit.* 'letters of the alphabet'; cf. Gal. iv. 3, and note there. It is usually explained as having reference to rudimentary instructions about externals. Several recent writers have, however, given quite a different meaning to the words. The 'rudiments of the world' are, it is said, in the system of the Jewish mysticism, the personal spirits that ruled the elements. In support of this view the passage in Gal. iv. 1–11 is cited. The verses that follow, since they contrast Christ with all such lower though spiritual existences, seem to confirm the interpretation. The view is at least an interesting one, and has a distinct bearing on the special dangers to which the Colossian Christians were exposed.

9. bodily: i. e. 'in a bodily fashion'; cf. i. 19, and Phil. iii. 21.

10. the head. Since all powers are subordinate to Christ, no other mediation, were it possible, is necessary.

11. not made with hands: see Eph. ii. 11, and note; Phil. iii. 3.

circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in 12
baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through
faith in the working of God, who raised him from the
dead. And you, being dead through your trespasses 13
and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, *I say*, did he
quicken together with him, having forgiven us all our
trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in 14
ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us:
and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the
cross; having put off from himself the principalities and 15

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the circumcision of Christ: not the actual historical incident, but this spiritual circumcision of which he is speaking that comes from union with him.

12. having been buried: see Rom. vi. 3, 4, and note there the metaphor is quite clear.

13. Their uncircumcision was a symbol of their spiritual deadness.

14. bond: i.e. 'an unpaid note of hand,' consisting in ordinances standing against us. The incriminating writing was first of all blotted out, and then the actual document destroyed.

15. having put off from himself, &c. This is a very difficult phrase to interpret. To begin with, the word here used for 'to put off' does not occur in any earlier writer, but is used again in iii. 9, while the noun formed from it occurs in verse 11 of this chapter. An analogous form is of frequent occurrence, meaning to 'strip' or 'despoil.'

Three main interpretations are given:—

(1) That of the text, understanding it as meaning either that Christ put off from himself finally all the powers of evil, which (in Lightfoot's phrase) 'had clung like a Nessus robe about his humanity,' or that God (who is understood to be the subject of the verb) had now laid aside all other forms of revelation, imperfect and unsatisfactory, such as the proclamation of the law by angels (referred to in Heb. ii. 2; Gal. iii. 19; Acts vii. 53) and now manifested himself in Christ.

(2) That of the R. V. margin, 'having put off from himself *his body* he made a shew of the principalities and powers.' There is no Greek equivalent for the words 'his body,' though some Latin versions seem to have substituted the words 'his flesh' for 'the principalities.' There being no word in the original and no suggestion in the context for introducing the words supplied seem fatal to this translation.

the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing
over them in it.
16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink,
or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath
17 day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the
18 body is Christ's. Let no man rob you of your prize by

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(3) That of the American Revisers, 'having despoiled the principalities and powers.' If we adopt their translation, it only remains to ask whether 'the principalities and powers' are to be understood of infernal or heavenly beings. If the angelic messengers are here regarded, as they are elsewhere represented, as the ministers of the law, and this conception gave rise to the Colossian errors of unduly exalting angels to the lessening of the authority of Christ, we can give a definite and appropriate meaning to the words.

openly may also be rendered 'boldly,' the meaning it has in every passage in Paul's writings, and is not inappropriate here.

triumphing is better rendered 'leading in triumph,' as in 2 Cor. ii. 14.

in it: viz. 'in the cross,' as understood by the majority of interpreters, 'the violence of the metaphor being its justification,' as Lightfoot says, but some moderns understand it of 'the bond' (verse 14). 'In doing away with the bond, God triumphed over those who administered it' (Abbott).

ii. 16–19. *A warning not to be deluded by the shadow for the substance.*

Two errors are here dealt with—the practical one, of being influenced by ascetic practices and ritual, and the speculative one, of permitting the supposed mediation of angels to obscure the supreme majesty of Christ.

judge you: i. e. 'take you to task.'

in meat, &c.: rather, 'in the matter of eating and drinking'; the words signify the action, not the food or drink.

a feast day, &c.: i. e. the annual, monthly, and weekly ceremonials of the Jewish ritualists. Cf. Gal. iv. 10.

17. is Christ's: i. e. is his possession.

18. rob . . . of your prize. The word so rendered is a very rare one, having been only found in two other places in the whole range of Greek literature. One of these, however, almost constitutes a definition of its meaning, which is there given as 'decides or takes part against.' This translation, 'give judgement against you,' makes excellent sense here, as being a stage in

a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast the Head, 19
from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God.

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advance of verse 16. The ordinary meaning is taken from the simple verb (of which this is a compound), which means primarily 'to act as umpire,' and so award the prize, but there is no evidence that this word ever held any reference to the derivative meaning.

voluntary. So difficult of interpretation is the word thus rendered, that editors have been driven to the last resort of conjectural emendation of the text to make it more satisfactory. There is no MS. authority, however, for such a course, and one must make the best of the reading as it exists. This seems most satisfactorily done by the R. V. marg., viz. 'of his own mere will, by humility,' &c. This interpretation, satisfactory on other grounds, is confirmed by the word 'will-worship' in verse 23, where see note.

humility. This is false as contrasted with the true humility of iii. 12. The humility that said it was unworthy to approach God, and so needed the intervention of angels, was of the nature of—

'the devil's darling sin,
The pride that apes humility.'

dwelling in is a word that varies in its meaning, being rendered with equal accuracy as in the text or in the R. V. marg. 'taking his stand upon,' or 'poring over,' or 'making parade of.'

the things which he hath seen: i. e. his visions. But many ancient MSS. insert a negative, as the R. V. marg. indicates, and the A. V. text renders. The preponderance of authority seems to be against the negative, and the sense of the R. V. text is more in agreement with the tenor of the passage. Clever conjectural emendations have been made here also, but without sufficient evidence of probability. The best would render the whole phrase, 'treading on empty air,' which agrees admirably with the context, were we only certain that the existing text is corrupt.

19. the increase of God: cf. 1 Cor. iii. 6, 'God gave the increase.' Lightfoot suggests that this whole illustration may have been due to Paul's association at the time with Luke who, as a physician, may have by his conversation suggested such a line of thought. Cf. Eph. iv. 16.

20 If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject
21 yourselves to ordinances, Handle not, nor taste, nor
22 touch (all which things are to perish with the using),
23 after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; *but are* not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh.

3 If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the

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ii. 20—iii. 4. *Death with Christ destroys all response to worldly claims, and life with Christ has a hidden but glorious heritage.*

Those who have died with Christ must not re-enslave themselves to worldly standards and the bondage of human traditions. Theirs is a fuller freedom, an ampler air. The breath of heaven is in their hearts, and in this atmosphere no lower life can flourish, while fairer visions are ever unfolding, till one day the veil will be rent, and the perfect glory be revealed.

21. These are examples of the ordinances referred to. The first word is stronger than the third. Coverdale's rendering is good, save that the order is inverted, 'As when they say, Touch not this, taste not that, handle not that.'

22. For the thought of the verse cf. our Lord's teaching in Matt. xv. 16-20, and Paul's elsewhere in 1 Cor. vi. 13 and viii. 8.

23. a show of wisdom: i. e. 'a repute of wisdom.'

will-worship is a word found only here in the N. T. It denotes 'a self-imposed service'—the following the dictates of one's own will—the outcome of intellectual pride.

not of any value. These words are very difficult to interpret. The rendering of the R. V. is the favourite one with the majority of modern commentators. An older interpretation is 'to satisfy the reasonable wants of the body, not holding it (the body) in any honour.' Against both interpretations there are serious objections from the strained sense they put upon words and constructions in the original. A more satisfactory meaning is got out of the words by understanding them in some such way as follows, 'this security of the body does not bring any honour save that of the full satisfaction of the flesh,' i. e. it only pampers the pride of the natural man.

iii. **1. If . . . ye were raised** points to a definite crisis in their spiritual experience.

seek the things that are above: for the contrast see Phil. iii. 19.

things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the
right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that 2
are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.
For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 3
When Christ, *who is* our life, shall be manifested, then 4
shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the 5
earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and
covetousness, the which is idolatry; for which things' 6
sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobe-
dience; in the which ye also walked aforetime, when ye 7
lived in these things. But now put ye also away all 8
these; anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking
out of your mouth: lie not one to another; seeing that 9
ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have 10
put on the new man, which is being renewed unto

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iii. 5-11. *Death to sin. Life to righteousness.*

Sins of the outward and inward life to be destroyed, and the new garment of Christliness to be put on.

5. The rendering of the American Revisers is good, 'Put to death.' Cf. parallel in Eph. v. 5 and note.

6. The omission of the words **upon the sons of disobedience** does not have many MSS. to support it. The words occur in Eph. v. 6, and it is possible they were copied here from that verse, though there is no reason to suppose that Paul (when the passages are so closely parallel) may not have repeated himself exactly here.

7. in the which . . . in these things. In the original both may be masculine or neuter, and thus the phrase can be understood in several different ways: either both neuter, as in the R. V. text, or both masculine, or one masculine and the other neuter. The parallel in Eph. ii. 3 inclines one to read 'among whom.'

The tenses of the verb are different in Greek, so that 'walked' denotes a series of single acts, and 'were living' a continuous state.

8. shameful speaking seems clearly to mean 'abusive' rather than 'unclean' language.

9. seeing that, &c.: may also be read 'putting off' as part of the exhortation.

knowledge after the image of him that created him:
11 where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and
uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman:
but Christ is all, and in all.
12 Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and belovēd,
a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness,
13 longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each
other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as
14 the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these
things *put on* love, which is the bond of perfectness.
15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the

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11. Cf. Gal. iii. 28. **Greek** to the Jew was a general term for 'Gentile.'

barbarian is said to be an attempt to represent the sound of uncouth speech—'gibberish.' Lightfoot quotes Max Müller: 'Not till that word *barbarian* was struck out of the dictionary of mankind, and replaced by *brother*, not till the right of all nations of the world to be classed as members of one genus or kind was recognized, can we look even for the first beginnings of our science (of language). This change was effected by Christianity.'

Scythian is not a contrast, but a climax, since that nation was looked down on as the most barbarous of all the barbarians. Its usage corresponded with our 'vandal.'

bondman: this contrast is probably suggested through his mind being full of the case of Philemon and Onesimus. At all events that incident would give point to the words.

iii. 12–17. *The beautiful garments of holiness, and the spirit of praise.*

12. kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering. The two first words, says Lightfoot, 'describe the Christian *temper of mind* generally,' while the latter two 'denote the *exercise* of the Christian temper in its outward bearing towards others.'

13. complaint. The 'quarrel' of A.V. is a usage of the older English. It is found again in Mark vi. 19 (A.V.), 'Herodias had a quarrel against him,' and the dictionaries quote Felton: 'I have no quarrel to the practice.'

even as the Lord. The majority of MSS. (some of the first authority) read 'Christ.' The parallel in Eph. iv. 32 has 'God in Christ.' This is the only passage in which Christ is directly said to forgive.

15. let the peace of Christ rule. Abbott suggestively compares

which also ye were called in one body; and be ye
thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in 16
all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with
psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with grace
in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in 17
word or in deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting 18
in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not 19
bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all 20
things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord. Fathers, 21
provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged.
Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters 22
according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men-

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the phrase 'the king's peace.' The idea of 'arbitrate' must not be pressed; see ii. 18 and note. Many MSS. read 'the peace of God,' but it is not so suitable to the context, and is probably copied from Phil. iv. 7.

in one body: cf. Eph. iv. 3, 4.

be ye thankful: rather, 'become thankful.' The truly thankful spirit is the goal towards which they are to strive. The word rendered 'thankful' may also mean 'agreeable,' 'pleasant,' as in Prov. xi. 16, 'a *gracious* woman,' and some think it has that meaning here—the duty of thankfulness being inculcated in verse 17. The perfect courtesy of Paul would make it quite fitting that he should exhort his fellow-Christians to a similar spirit.

16. in all wisdom. These words may be equally well connected with the words that follow, if not better than with the words that precede them.

iii. 18—iv. 1. *A series of precepts for the special relations of life.* For the whole passage compare the more elaborate treatment in Eph. v. 22—vi. 9 and the notes there.

19. be not bitter: 'don't be "cross" with.'

21. that they be not discouraged: 'that they may not lose heart.' Cf. such a study of child-life as that of Maggie Tulliver in the *Mill on the Floss*.

22. It has been suggested that the large proportionate space devoted to the duties of masters and slaves here is due to the case of Onesimus.

pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord:
23 whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and
24 not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall
receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the
25 Lord Christ. For he that doeth wrong shall receive
again for the wrong that he hath done: and there is no
4 respect of persons. Masters, render unto your servants
that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have
a Master in heaven.

2 Continue stedfastly in prayer, watching therein with
3 thanksgiving; withal praying for us also, that God may
open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery
4 of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may
5 make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom
6 toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let
your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt,
that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one.

7 All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you,
the beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-

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24. ye serve: may also be read as imperative, 'serve the Lord Christ,' and probably better so, in view of what follows.

25. he that doeth wrong: obviously the unjust master. Some understand the reference to be to both masters and slaves.

iv. 2–6. *Exhortation and counsel.*

A general exhortation to prayer and a special request for intercession. Advice as to conduct and speech.

3. a door for the word: for the metaphor cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 12.

4. An interesting interpretation has been recently given of this verse. It is taken as being a reference to Paul's coming trial, the result of which is stated in Phil. i. 12 ff., and is read as follows:—'in order that I may make it manifest, now I am bound to speak'—i. e. be able to set forth clearly the constraint of the Cross; cf. 1 Cor. ix. 16, 'for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.'

iv. 7–18. *Personal commendations and salutations. Benediction.*

7. fellow-servant is added to the description given in Eph. vi. 21, probably to put him on a level with Epaphras (i. 7).

servant in the Lord: whom I have sent unto you for this 8
very purpose, that ye may know our estate, and that he
may comfort your hearts; together with Onesimus, the 9
faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They
shall make known unto you all things that *are done* here.
Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and 10
Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (touching whom ye
received commandments; if he come unto you, receive
him), and Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the 11
circumcision: these only *are my* fellow-workers unto the
kingdom of God, men that have been a comfort unto
me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ 12
Jesus, saluteth you, always striving for you in his prayers,

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8. The reading of the A. V. in this verse cannot be supported.

9. Note the fine courtesy of this description of Onesimus, and the assumption that he will be received in this spirit by the Colossian church; cf. Philem. 16.

10. Aristarchus, we learn from Acts xix. 29, and xx. 4, was a native of Thessalonica, a member of the deputation to Jerusalem, and a sharer in Paul's perils at Ephesus. From Acts xxvii. 2 we learn that he was Paul's companion also in the voyage to Rome; whether he parted from the Apostle at Myra and joined him in the imperial city later, as Lightfoot thinks, or was with him throughout all the dangers of that memorable journey, is not known. His name is associated with Paul also in Philem. 24, and is doubtless included in the mention of his fellow-prisoners in Rom. xvi. 7.

Mark. The well-known defection of Mark, as related in Acts xiii. 13, and xv. 37–40, with its subsequent estrangement between Paul and Barnabas, might be a reason for coolness on the part of some of the churches towards the evangelist. Again Paul's courtesy and generous feeling are manifest.

11. Jesus: of this man nothing else is known. The surname 'Justus' was common.

who are. These words are better taken in connexion with the words that follow, 'of those of the circumcision these alone are fellow-workers.'

12. Epaphras: 'Paul's delegate, his representative in Christ' (Lightfoot). He had probably been involved in the Apostle's imprisonment, cf. Philem. 23, perhaps through his devotion to him.

that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will
13 of God. For I bear him witness, that he hath much
labour for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them
14 in Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas
15 salute you. Salute the brethren that are in Laodicea,
and Nymphas, and the church that is in their house.
16 And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause
that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and
17 that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea. And say to

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13. Laodicea (see Introduction, p. 13). Epaphras seems to have stood in the same relation to all.

14. Luke: cf. 2 Tim. iv. 11, and Philem. 24. See the Introduction to Luke's Gospel in this series.

Demas. It is conjectured that this is a contraction for Demetrius. He is named again in Philem. 24. In 2 Tim. iv. 10 there is a sad reference to him, 'Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica.' Perhaps some forecast of that 'rift within the lute' prevents Paul adding any commendatory note here to his name.

15. Nymphas is probably a short form of Nymphodorus, of which form of contraction there are many instances, as Zenas for Zenodorus (Tit. iii. 12, 13), Olympas for Olympiodorus (Rom. xvi. 15).

in their house is difficult to explain. Some understand it as being 'the family of Nymphas,' but there is no parallel usage to justify this interpretation. Some refer it to a distinct church from that of Laodicea. The reading 'her' has the slenderest manuscript support, and arises from understanding Nymphas as a woman's name—a very unlikely form. The form 'his' has better authority, and is the most simple, but the reading of the text has undoubtedly the best MS. support.

16. the epistle from Laodicea. What was it? Some have answered, a letter written *from* Laodicea, either by Paul or by the church there. Paul, however, had never been at Laodicea (ii. 1), nor was he likely to advise the Colossian church to read a letter written by the Laodiceans, even were that possible. We are compelled, then, to understand it as referring to a letter written to the Laodicean church, and there are three answers to the question:—

(1) There is a letter to the Laodiceans extant. It only exists in Latin, but shews evidence of being originally written in Greek. It 'hovered about the doors of the sacred canon' for nine hundred

Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. 18
Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

---

years, but was clearly seen then to be a mere collection of Pauline phrases with no unity or originality about it. A translation of it is given in Appendix A.

(2) The letter may be lost. There is no need to assume this fact, though it seems more than likely (cf. 1 Cor. v. 9) that we have only a selection of the many letters that Paul would doubtless write.

(3) The letter is one we possess under another name, viz. the Epistle to the Ephesians; see the Introduction to that Epistle, p. 17.

17. Archippus: see Philem. 2, where he is described as Paul's 'fellow-soldier.' He seems to have been a leading member of the church at Colossæ, though Lightfoot thinks it more probable he resided at Laodicea.

Take heed, &c. There is here a strong resemblance to the language used in the Pastoral Epistles, cf. 2 Tim. iv. 5, and if Archippus was a young man it was natural that Paul should so address him, without there being any reference to past carelessness.

18. Remember my bonds. This most touching appeal is rendered more eloquent when we remember, as Alford bids us do, that 'his chains moved over the paper as he wrote. His hand was chained to the soldier that kept him.'

Grace be with you. This form of benediction is found also in 1 and 2 Tim.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

PHILEMON

1 PAUL, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our
brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow-worker,
2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow-
3 soldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you
and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

4 I thank my God always, making mention of thee in

1–3. *Greeting.*

1. a prisoner. Cf. Eph. iii. 1, and note. Here the term is peculiarly suitable for his appeal.

Timothy. See Phil. i. 1, and note. Timothy may have known Philemon personally.

Philemon. See Introduction to this Epistle. The R. V. rightly connects 'our' with both epithets.

2. Apphia. See Introduction to this Epistle.

sister: much better authenticated and more probable than A. V.'s 'beloved.'

Archippus. See Introduction to this Epistle.

fellow-soldier. See Phil. ii. 25, and note.

the church in thy house. Of such an assembly we read in Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15. See note on latter passage.

We see that the subject of this letter was deemed of sufficient importance for communication to the circle of Christian disciples.

3. Grace to you, &c. The form of greeting is identical with that in Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Eph. i. 2 (where see note); Phil. i. 2.

my prayers, hearing of thy love, and of the faith which 5
thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the
saints; that the fellowship of thy faith may become 6
effectual, in the knowledge of every good thing which
is in you, unto Christ. For I had much joy and comfort 7
in thy love, because the hearts of the saints have been
refreshed through thee, brother.

Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to 8

4–7. *Thanksgiving and prayer.*

The Apostle's thanksgiving at hearing of Philemon's faith and active aid to his fellow believers, and also his prayer for the increase of the same.

Paul follows his usual method of passing at once to an expression of thankfulness after the opening greeting. For his own views on the subject of thanksgiving see 2 Cor. iv. 15, ix. 11, 12; and cf. the passages in the Epistles contained in this volume with the notes. This is the only case in which a thanksgiving occurs in a purely personal letter, save in 2 Tim. i. 3.

4. **making mention of** introduces the idea of intercession, which follows in verse 6.

5. The order of the words here is not the natural one, and the inversion gives rise to a rhetorical figure called *chiasm*, of which there is another instance in Gal. iv. 4, 5. He is eager to mention the active love of Philemon, and this leads him to think of its source, viz. faith, which with its object is thus parenthetically introduced between love and *its* object.

6. **the fellowship of thy faith** seems best understood as referring to Philemon's kindly services to his fellow Christians, which may open his heart to understand still further the mysteries of the gospel, and the grace of Christ. Christ 'went about doing good,' and to follow his example is the surest way of learning to know him. Cf. Col. i. 9; Eph. iv. 13.

The reading 'in us' is preferred by Lightfoot, but **in you** has undoubted preponderance of authority, and does not confuse the sense. The growth of Philemon's character is the object of Paul's desire. Cf. for the idea Eph. iv. 15.

8–17. *Paul's personal plea for Onesimus.*

The plea for Onesimus, based rather on love than on authority. The Apostle identifies the erring but repentant slave with himself, and pleads as *in propria persona*.

8. He bases his entreaty on the revelation of Philemon's character that the reports of his habitual conduct have given.

boldness='freedom of speech'; see Eph. iii. 12, and note,

9 enjoin thee that which is befitting, yet for love's sake
I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul the aged,
10 and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus: I beseech
thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds,
11 Onesimus, who was aforetime unprofitable to thee, but
12 now is profitable to thee and to me: whom I have sent
back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart:
13 whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf

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also Col. ii. 15 note. As an apostle he has the right to dictate lines of proper conduct to the members of Christian churches.

9. for love's sake. A fine practical illustration of the great principle laid down in 1 Cor. xiii, 'love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.' Cf. the opening and close of Pliny's letter quoted in the Introduction.

Paul the aged: or 'Paul an ambassador.' In the Greek the only difference between the two words is the presence or absence of the letter 'e.' The undoubted use of the ambassador idea in Eph. vi. 20 gives preference to that word's being employed here, as also does the sense of authority. It is more noteworthy that an honoured ambassador, to whom also has been granted the additional honour of being a prisoner, should so stoop to plead. If we read 'aged,' that, coupled with the thought of imprisonment, must be understood as adding pathos to the pleading, and the idea of authority falls into the background.

10. Mark the rhetorical device of withholding, as long as possible, the name of the person for whom he pleads.

whom I have begotten: for metaphor see 1 Cor. iv. 15, and Gal. iv. 19.

Onesimus: for the name and the play upon it that follows in verse 11 see Introduction to this Epistle. Note the fine feeling of Paul's association of Philemon with himself in joint interest in Onesimus.

12. Onesimus accompanied the letter; see Col. iv. 7-9.

my very heart. Cf. our use for persons of the terms 'dear heart,' 'sweetheart,' also Sir P. Sidney's song:—

> 'My heart in him keeps him and me in one;
> His heart in me my thoughts and fancies guides;'

and

> 'Thou art my love, my life, my heart.'—*To Anthea.*

13. in thy behalf: with a fine reference to Philemon's conduct to which he has already referred, as shewing that he feels sure

he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel:
but without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy 14
goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free will.
For perhaps he was therefore parted *from thee* for a 15
season, that thou shouldest have him for ever; no 16
longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother
beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee,
both in the flesh and in the Lord. If then thou countest 17
me a partner, receive him as myself. But if he hath 18
wronged thee at all, or oweth *thee* aught, put that to
mine account; I Paul write it with mine own hand, 19

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his friend would choose to render these offices in person if he could. Onesimus has thus stood in his stead.

14. Paul feels there must not be so much as the appearance of constraint.

15. parted. It is a euphemistic expression. Paul does not say 'ran away,' that he may not rouse Philemon's anger by such a direct reference to his slave's fault, and may also point him to the higher Will, that has directed the whole course of events.

have: either means 'to have back,' or 'to have wholly,' and both ideas may be implied. Nor is there henceforth any limit to the service—it passes into eternal regions, and is no longer bound by earthly conditions. Thus Philemon has gained, not lost.

16. Paul here recalls the words of Christ in John xv. 15. Philemon has regained his slave, but he has a new gift in a devoted fellow disciple of Christ. Whether he remains technically a slave or not he is no more to be looked on merely *as* a slave.

17. a partner='a man with the truest fellow feeling,' 'a comrade.' Paul gives Titus the same title in 2 Cor viii. 23.

18–22. *Paul will be Philemon's guarantor, though the latter is his debtor. Love will win its way.*

Paul will stand guarantee for any loss Philemon may have sustained, though indeed the latter is deeply in Paul's own debt. The Apostle feels perfect confidence that his request will be granted, and looks forward to a speedy meeting.

18. Here again Paul refrains from naming the injury in definite terms.

19. The language is the formal one of a legal deed—'Paul's promissory note' (Vincent). The letter, it would seem, was all in his own handwriting, as contrasted with his ordinary custom

I will repay it: that I say not unto thee how that thou
20 owest to me even thine own self besides. Yea, brother,
let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my heart in
21 Christ. Having confidence in thine obedience I write
unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what
22 I say. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I hope
that through your prayers I shall be granted unto you.

23 Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, saluteth
24 thee; *and so do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my
fellow-workers.

25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your
spirit. Amen.

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of dictating to an amanuensis. Cf. 2 Thess. iii. 17; Col. iv. 18; Gal. vi. 11, and notes on these passages.

how that thou owest, &c. Philemon was Paul's own convert. Might not then any question of repayment be from the other side?

20. The word **brother** has in it a note of tender appeal. Cf. its use in Gal. iii. 15, vi. 1, 18. Commenting on the second of these passages Bengel says, 'A whole argument lies hidden under this one word,' which statement may be truthfully applied here.

let me have joy: or 'profit.' The Greek word here used, *onaimēn,* seems to have a probable playing reference to the name Onesimus, as the habit was a common Hebrew one. The word suggests the relation and duty of a son to his father.

21. Does Paul mean that Philemon may set his slave free? See Introduction.

22. Cf. Phil. ii. 24, and note. The Apostle would most likely travel to Colossæ via Philippi. Paul's contemplated visit would act as an additional incentive to Philemon to carry out his wishes. The word used for **lodging** does not necessarily mean in Philemon's house. The invitation to be his guest the Apostle leaves him to give—a fine instance of his true courtesy.

23–25. *Salutations and benediction.*

23, 24. For the names here mentioned see Col. iv. 10, &c., and notes there. The name of Epaphras is probably mentioned first as best known to Philemon.

For the particular form of the benediction see Gal. vi. 18.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

PHILIPPIANS

PAUL and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all 1
the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the
bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God 2
our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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i. 1–2. *Opening salutation.*

The two names are coupled in the introductions to 2 Corinthians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Timothy had been with Paul when he first visited Macedonia, as related in Acts xvi. He had revisited it (Acts xix. 22, xx. 1, 4), and is now about to be sent again as Paul's representative (ii. 19–23).

The omission of the title 'apostle' shews Paul's intimate friendly terms with the church, where he does not need to stand upon authority.

servants of Christ Jesus occurs in a similar position only in Romans and Titus. It is a favourite title with him, as indicative of his loving devotion to his Lord.

bishops and deacons. This is the only instance in the letters of Paul (except the Pastorals) where these words occur in an official sense, though both 1 Corinthians (e. g. xii. 28) and Ephesians (iv. 11, 12) reveal a fairly well organized church, but we are not in a position to say that each was identical in its officers and their titles. 'Paul is a sower of ideas, not a methodical administrator; a despiser of ecclesiastical forms and of ritualism; a mighty idealist filled with Christian enthusiasm, and who knew no other church government than that of Christ himself inspiring his disciples with the knowledge of what they ought to say and do' (Réville).

This unique occurrence of these titles in a greeting of one of Paul's letters has given rise to much controversy. His general language

3 I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you,
4 always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you
5 all making my supplication with joy, for your fellowship
in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now;
6 being confident of this very thing, that he which began
a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus

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is vague and without definite principle. On the two occasions on which he gives lists of those endowed with spiritual gifts he mentions neither 'bishops' nor 'deacons' among them (see Eph. iv. 11 and 1 Cor. xii. 5-11). Again, the word 'diaconate' is used of Christian service in the most wide sense, and includes himself and his activities. Neither can we definitely say that the offices of 'presbyter' and 'bishop are either identical or distinct. The 'bishop,' at least, had not its later ecclesiastical significance, for there are 'bishops' in the church at Philippi. Still, a process of development seems evident in this greeting, a process of differentiation had at all events commenced, and in the transition period that intervened between the apostolic age and that of the Catholic Church of the second century, we find the state of things here indicated expressly set forth in the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, an interesting tractate written about the close of the first century. In it we find the apostle, who must not remain in one place longer than two days, the prophet, the bishop, and the deacon. The two latter are officers of local churches of lower standing than the two former. By the time we reach the Ignatian letters—in the second decade of the second century—these offices have already hardened into three distinct grades; but into these later developments it is not necessary to enter. The fact of the titles being here coupled, and nowhere else in Paul's letters, tends to indicate a later date for this Epistle.

i. 3-11. *Thanksgiving, commendation, and prayer.*
The Apostle thanks God continually for their zealous help in spreading the gospel, and he is certain their growth in the spiritual life will reach full maturity. He warmly commends their personal affection and service, and prays for them much intellectual, moral, and spiritual blessing.

5. fellowship: doubtless in its more general sense, embracing every form of it.

the first day refers to the introduction of the gospel to their city (Acts xvi).

6. the day of Jesus Christ may be almost called a technical term with Paul for the Lord's Second Advent. Sometimes it is shortened to 'the day' (as in 1 Thess. v. 4), sometimes 'that day'

Christ: even as it is right for me to be thus minded 7
on behalf of you all, because I have you in my heart,
inasmuch as, both in my bonds and in the defence and
confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers with me
of grace. For God is my witness, how I long after you 8
all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus. And this I 9
pray, that your love may abound yet more and more
in knowledge and all discernment; so that ye may 10
approve the things that are excellent; that ye may
be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ;
being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which 11
are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise
of God.

(2 Thess. i. 10), sometimes 'the day of Christ' (verse 10 below), sometimes 'the day of the Lord' (1 Thess. v. 2), sometimes 'the day of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. i. 8).

7. I have you is better on grounds of grammar and sense than the variant of the margin 'ye have me.'

defence is, in the original, 'apology,' as in *The Apology of Socrates.*

confirmation is a technical, legal word for 'guarantee' or 'vindication' (see Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 108, and Introduction, p. 40).

9. in knowledge. This prayer for knowledge is common to the three Epistles in this book. Cf. Eph. i. 17, 18, iii. 18, 19; Col. i. 9.

discernment. The word used here is not found again in all Paul's writings. It implies 'discriminating discernment'—a high spiritual gift.

10. approve the things that are excellent. The word translated 'to be excellent' means also 'to differ.' Hence arise two interpretations, that of the text, and that of the margin, 'to prove the things that differ.' It must be said that the latter interpretation follows better on the mention of spiritual discernment, such insight of love as guides to the decision of such difficult problems of practice as are discussed in 1 Corinthians.

void of offence may mean either 'without offence in oneself' or 'without offence toward others'—'without stumbling' or 'without putting stumbling-blocks in others' way.' The latter seems more in accord with the general sense of the passage.

the day of Christ: see verse 6, and note.

12 Now I would have you know, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me have fallen out rather unto
13 the progress of the gospel; so that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole prætorian guard,
14 and to all the rest; and that most of the brethren in the Lord, being confident through my bonds, are more

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i. 12-17. *The state of the gospel in Rome. Persecution spells progress.*

His imprisonment has led to the conversion of many of his guards, and has emboldened his friends, while it has stirred up his rivals, so that on all sides the activity of preaching spreads.

12. progress: the word so rendered is believed to gain its meaning from the figure of pioneers cutting a way before an advancing army.

13. became manifest in Christ. It was his imprisonment *for Christ* that was important. Men would talk about the *reason* of his imprisonment. Paul is much more sane than Ignatius, and in his speech before Agrippa wishes all his hearers were like himself 'except these bonds.' The more hysterical writer of a later day describes himself as 'a prisoner in bonds which are a divine ornament' (Ignatius to Smyrna).

the whole prætorian guard. This was the imperial guard of ten thousand picked men, increased afterwards to sixteen thousand. Augustus organized it, and Tiberius placed all the cohorts in Rome in a fortified camp. The term 'pretorium' (used here) was used to denote the whole body of troops composing the guard, and so would mean here the soldiers who relieved one another in guarding Paul. Other usages of the word have been advocated (e.g. the camp, or barracks near the palace of Nero), but, if permissible, are certainly exceptional. Prof. Ramsay includes in the term 'the supreme imperial court,' a meaning that is not clearly supported in antiquity.

to all the rest: probably 'to the city at large.' The A.V. rendering 'in all other places' is wrong. The 'pretorium' was not a *place*, as has been shewn.

14. the brethren in the Lord, being confident though my bonds. Differences of translation arise here through the possibility of difference in the connexion of the words. The translation of the text is that followed by many, but it is a little difficult to give a clear meaning to 'being confident through my bonds.' At best it must mean that 'seeing how he bore his bonds they learned the secret of his truth.' Therefore it is better to put this directly by connecting 'in the Lord' with the words that

abundantly bold to speak the word of God without
fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and 15
strife; and some also of good will: the one *do it* of 16
love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the
gospel: but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not 17
sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my
bonds. What then? only that in every way, whether 18
in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein
I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this 19
shall turn to my salvation, through your supplication

---

follow, 'being confident in the Lord by reason of my bonds.' As he has already said, his bonds are eloquent.

16. In the A. V., following the traditional Greek text, these verses are reversed, so as to follow the order of the statements in verse 15; but it is a common rhetorical figure to invert the order of the reference in amplifying a statement. The translator of the text understands the words 'of love' and 'of faction' as qualifying the verb, but they may also be taken as complete classes, 'the men of love' and 'the men of faction.' So the American Revisers, in common with many interpreters, render 'They that are moved by love do it, . . . but they that are factious proclaim Christ, not sincerely.'

17. faction. The original word is derived from one that means 'a hired servant,' hence those who serve for hire—for their own gain, and so 'partisans.'

i. 18-26. *Christ the beginning and the end.*

In all ways Christ is magnified, and so Paul is more than content. Life and death have only value in relation to him, but for the Philippians' sake Paul has confidence that he will yet live on earth, and see them in the flesh once more.

18. A fine instance of Paul's optimism.

I rejoice. Here we have struck for the first time the dominant note of this Epistle—that of joy. We can almost see 'flash from his eyes the glow of his thanksgiving' (cf. i. 25, ii. 2, 17, 18, 28, 29, iii. 1, iv. 1, 4, 10).

19. What is **this?** Most reply, 'the afflictions he has endured,' but some 'the fact that Christ is preached.' The latter is less likely.

salvation is here used in its widest sense of the perfecting of his Christian life.

20 and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according
to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing
shall I be put to shame, but *that* with all boldness, as
always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my
21 body, whether by life, or by death. For to me to live
22 is Christ, and to die is gain. But if to live in the flesh,
—*if* this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall
23 choose I wot not. But I am in a strait betwixt the
two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ;

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the supply of: i. e. the supply *given by* the spirit of Jesus Christ.

20. earnest expectation. The picture underlying the original word is that of a man watching some object, with *his head turned away from* all other objects, so it signifies 'intentness.'

boldness: see Eph. iii. 12 and note.

21. There can be no finer comment on this grand verse than the magnificent closing lines of Mr. Myers' great poem *St. Paul*:—

> 'Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
> He shall suffice me, for he hath sufficed:
> Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning;
> Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.'

22. There are two or three ways of understanding the main clauses of this verse. First, that given in the text; secondly, that of the margin. 'But if to live in the flesh *be my lot*, this is the fruit of my work; and what I shall choose I wot not.' If this is correct, it is difficult to understand the omission of the words supplied. Lightfoot would make the first clause a question: 'But what if my living in the flesh is to bear fruit?' It is possible on any rendering to understand 'What shall I choose?' as an abrupt question, as the margin of the R. V. indicates.

I wot not = 'I know not.' This Old English form is common in the A. V. In Anglo-Saxon the pres. infin. was 'witan,' pres. indic. 'wat,' past 'wiste.' In Old English the forms (used in A. V.) were 'wot' and 'wist' respectively. In Gen. xxiv. 21 we have 'to wit whether'; in Joshua ii. 5, 'I wot not,' and in ii. 4, 'I wist not.' Cf. also 2 Cor. viii. 1 and Acts iii. 17. The translation 'I know not' is not in accordance with the N. T. usage of the original word. In every other case it is rendered by 'declare' or 'make known,' as in iv. 6 of this Epistle, 'let your requests be made known.' And that sense is perfectly good here, indeed even more forcible. The R. V. margin gives it.

for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is 24
more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, 25
I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all,
for your progress and joy in the faith; that your glorying 26
may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence
with you again. Only let your manner of life be worthy 27
of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see
you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand
fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of
the gospel; and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries: 28
which is for them an evident token of perdition, but of
your salvation, and that from God; because to you it 29
hath been granted in the behalf of Christ, not only to

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25. abide. The first verb is a simple and the second a compound form. The first simply speaks of continuance in life, the second of fellowship with others. The latter is the important thought in the present connexion.

26. glorying is the 'ground,' not the 'act,' of glorying. The sphere is important. It is not 'according to the flesh' (2 Cor. xi. 18) 'in men' (1 Cor. iii. 21), 'in appearance' (2 Cor. v. 12), but 'in Christ Jesus.'

i. 27–30. *The need and power of a consistent life of service and of suffering.*

27. let your manner of life be: *lit.* 'be citizens.' For the word cf. Acts xxiii. 1: 'I have exercised my citizenship with a good conscience.' Paul was at the centre of the great Empire, and had more clearly before him than ever the privileges of a Roman citizen. Philippi was a 'colony,' and so its citizens would easily grasp the idea underlying the word. Cf. iii. 20.

in one spirit, with one soul. The former word is both higher and wider than the latter. The 'spirit' is 'the point from which the whole personality is moved Godward' (Vincent).

striving for the faith of the gospel. Some would personify 'faith,' and understand the meaning to be that of 'striving in concert with faith'; but the more natural interpretation is that of the text, taking 'faith' in its widest sense as embracing the whole manifestation of the Christian life.

28. token of perdition: because of the powerlessness of the adversaries to overthrow the Divine work, and so that they must be destroyed with their ineffective works.

30 believe on him, but also to suffer in his behalf: having
the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to
be in me.

2 If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, if any
consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if
2 any tender mercies and compassions, fulfil ye my joy,
that ye be of the same mind, having the same love,
3 being of one accord, of one mind; *doing* nothing through
faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind
4 each counting other better than himself; not looking
each of you to his own things, but each of you also to
5 the things of others. Have this mind in you, which
6 was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of

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29. Suffering brings assurance; cf. Browning:—

> 'How could saints and martyrs *fail* see truth
> Streak the night's blackness?'
> *The Ring and the Book* ('the Pope'), l. 1827.

30. now hear: from this letter and from Epaphroditus.

ii. 1–11. *The mind of Christ—seen in his voluntary humiliation—should be found also in his disciples.*

The true evidence of a Christian spirit is to be seen in the unanimity, love, and humility that characterize the disciples, for this is the best witness, that they have caught the mind of the Master, who for their sakes willingly stripped himself of all his rightful glory, and stooped even to the cross of shame for their sakes. From the cross he rose to higher glory and universal empire.

1. The earnestness of the appeal seems to arise from the Apostle's fear of internal dissensions (cf. verse 14, iv. 2, 5, 7).

5. What is pointed to is obviously both Christ's lowliness and self-denial.

6. form is confessedly an inadequate rendering of the Greek word, but a better is impossible to find. The word denotes an adequate presentation of the essential nature of that which is represented. It occurs again in the next verse.

being is not the simple verb 'to be,' though often used as practically equivalent to it. The rendering of the margin 'being *originally*' is only *sometimes* the meaning of the word.

The majority of modern commentators render, 'did not reckon existence in the way of equality with God a thing to be greedily clutched.'

God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with
God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, 7
being made in the likeness of men; and being found 8
in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming
obedient *even* unto death, yea, the death of the cross.
Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto 9
him the name which is above every name; that in the 10

7. emptied himself. The Greek word for 'emptied' (*ekenōsē*) is that from which the technical theological term 'Kenosis' comes; and out of this passage, almost out of this word, has been built up a theory of the human personality of Christ. It seems very doubtful whether any such subtle meaning was in the mind of the writer when he used the word, and certainly it has been frequently overstrained. As a correlative to this passage see Col. i. 18-20 and ii. 9. The whole immediate purport of this passage is that of practical exhortation. The A. V. 'made himself of no reputation' is a marvellous instance of the occasional fitness of a paraphrase unwarranted by the original. It sums up the earthly life of Christ in an unforgettable phrase.

likeness. It is noteworthy that the word 'form' is not here repeated—and it is only his resemblance to men that is asserted. 'To affirm likeness is at once to assert similarity and to deny sameness' (Dickson, Baird Lect., 1883).

8. fashion is also a word that refers to the outward. The difference between form and fashion is evidenced in such compounds as in Rom. viii. 29, 'conformed to the image of his son'; iii. 10 of this Epistle, 'conformed unto his death'; contrasted with 1 Pet. i. 14, 'not fashioning (a compound verb) yourselves according to your former lusts.'

9. gave: cf. verse 6 above. He received as a gift what he refused to clutch as a prize.

the name. Many explanations are offered, but none is decisive. Some say 'Jesus,' others 'Lord,' others 'Son,' others 'Jesus Christ,' while Lightfoot holds it simply means 'dignity.' It has been supposed that there is a reference to the custom of bestowing new names at crises of individuals' history, as in the cases of Abraham and Israel; cf. also Rev. ii. 17 and iii. 12.

10. in the name. As in the O. T. usage the 'name' covers the whole person, so this phrase implies a whole-hearted allegiance to Jesus. Deissmann finds the same phrase used in the oath of fealty to the emperor[1].

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[1] *Bible Studies,* p. 197.

name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in
heaven and *things* on earth and *things* under the earth,
11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ
is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed,
not as in my presence only, but now much more in my
absence, work out your own salvation with fear and
13 trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to
14 will and to work, for his good pleasure. Do all things
15 without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be
blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish

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things **in heaven,** &c. As will be noticed from the italics, it is a question whether these adjectives are to be rendered as masculine or neuter. They may denote 'beings' as correctly as 'things.' Lightfoot upholds the latter rendering as being more universal. If 'beings under the earth' be the rendering, the reference may be to the departed in Hades.

11. to the glory of God the Father is dependent on 'confess.'

ii. 12-18. *How to live as God's luminaries. Paul's joy.*
The inward spirit and outward conduct of those who as God's luminaries are to light the world's darkness. The Apostle's honour and joy. The Philippians are to manifest even greater care, when the Apostle is absent from them, in obeying the Divine will and co-operating with the Divine Spirit. Thus shall their witness prove effective in the world, and bring joy to Paul's heart, even if it mean for him the martyr's crown.

12. So then. The obedience of Christ, named in verse 8, is to find its reflex in them.

13. Here also there is an analogy with the life of Christ. He did 'the will of the Father.'

his good pleasure is to be understood of His Fatherly love and tenderness.

14. disputings. Where the word is used elsewhere by Paul it is rendered by 'reasonings,' generally of a disputatious nature (cf. Rom. i. 21, xiv. 1; 1 Cor. iii. 20)—perhaps criticisms of a captious character.

15, 16. Cf. Matt. v. 14-16, and Browning, *Mulèykeh.*

'God gives each man one life, like a lamp, then gives
That lamp due measure of oil: lamp lighted—hold high, wave wide
Its comfort for others to share!'

in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,
among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding 16
forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory
in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither
labour in vain. Yea, and if I am offered upon the 17
sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with
you all: and in the same manner do ye also joy, and 18
rejoice with me.

But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly 19
unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when
I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who 20
will care truly for your state. For they all seek their 21
own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But ye know the 22

---

run . . . labour. The former (cf. Gal. ii. 2) is certainly a metaphor from the athlete's life, and Lightfoot thinks the second word refers also to the severity of 'training.'

17. offered. The correct rendering is given in the margin 'poured out as a drink-offering,' and is derived from the ritual of heathen sacrifice.

upon may also be rendered 'in addition to.'

Lightfoot's explanation of the passage makes the Philippians the priests, offering their faith to God, on which sacrifice it is probable Paul's blood will be poured as a libation. This seems far better than the ordinary one which sees in Paul the priest, and in his apostolic activity the ministry, while he will pour out his own blood on the sacrifice he offers.

rejoice with. Some render 'congratulate,' a meaning which the word does bear, but which does not seem suitable here.

18. There is a close parallel between this passage and one in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans, where he writes, 'Nay, grant me nothing more than that I be poured out a libation to God, while there is still an altar ready; that forming yourselves into a chorus in love ye may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ.'

ii. 19-24. *Probable visit of Timothy, his commendation—and Paul's hope to follow in person.*

20. truly: 'naturally,' as a parent does. Timothy would have such a feeling, as he was associated with Paul in founding the church.

21. they all. The charge is sweeping, but we cannot explain it, or discover who were embraced in it.

proof of him, that, as a child *serveth* a father, *so* he
23 served with me in furtherance of the gospel. Him
therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see
24 how it will go with me: but I trust in the Lord that
25 I myself also shall come shortly. But I counted it
necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and
fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your messenger and
26 minister to my need; since he longed after you all,
and was sore troubled, because ye had heard that he was
27 sick: for indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God
had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me
28 also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow. I have
sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when ye see
him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less
29 sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all
30 joy; and hold such in honour: because for the work of
Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life

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22. with me. We might have expected 'me,' but probably Paul's sense of comradeship, and still more the thought of the Father whom they both serve, altered the language.

ii. 25-30. *Suffering and mission of Epaphroditus.*
The immediate mission of Epaphroditus, who has suffered much in Christ's service, and in fulfilling their commission.

25. Epaphroditus was probably the bearer of the letter. He is mentioned only here, unless the form Epaphras (Col. i. 7 and iv. 12) be a contraction of the name, and the two be identical, which is most improbable. It is not at all likely that a Colossian should be a messenger of the Philippian church. The name was a common one.

messenger, i. e. 'apostle,' is not used here in its official sense.

28. more diligently: 'with the greater speed.'

the less sorrowful. A pathetic phrase, shewing that many troubles still remain Paul's portion.

30. nigh unto death. The original is not the same as that in verse 27, which is more correctly rendered 'was sick in a way nearly resembling death'—the form is very peculiar, and may be due to Luke.

hazarding. A genuine gambler's word. The word from which to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write **3**
the same things to you, to me indeed is not irksome, but
for you it is safe. Beware of the dogs, beware of the 2
evil workers, beware of the concision: for we are the 3

---

it is derived, meaning 'reckless,' gave the name to the voluntary visitors to the sick in the early church, who are well described in Kingsley's *Hypatia*, chap. v. Paul may have had the idea suggested by seeing the soldiers play at dice, which latter word he uses in Eph. iv. 14, rendered 'sleight' in our version. The 'not regarding' of the A. V. comes from a reading of several MSS. which alters the Greek word by the insertion of one letter.

iii. 1^a. '*Rejoice.*'

These words stand alone. Whether we are to say that Paul meant now to end the letter or not, they have no connexion with what either immediately precedes or follows them.

Finally: *lit.* 'as to what remains.' This may either mean 'finally' (cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 11), 'henceforth' (cf. Mark xiv. 41 Gr.), or 'besides' (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 1). It seems to have been used by Paul as a connective when passing on to some new subject. It cannot, in itself, be taken as a certain indication that he meant to close his letter forthwith (cf. Eph. vi. 10 and note).

iii. 1^b–3. *A warning against false teachers.*

To write the same things. This seems to refer to the contents of a letter or letters, which we do not possess. Polycarp in his letter to the Philippians refers to Paul's 'letter' or 'letters.' The word is in the plural, but the usage is not sufficiently determined to enable us to decide whether this denotes one letter or more. There can, I think, be little question that Paul wrote many more letters than we possess (see 1 Cor. v. 9; 2 Cor. x. 10, 11; 2 Thess. ii. 15, iii. 17, and verse 18 of this chapter, and notes there), and therefore there can be no real difficulty in seeing here a reference to one of these.

2. Beware of: 'look out for.' The verb simply means 'behold,' but with a note of caution.

dogs was a general term of contempt with Jew and Gentile, and denoted generally shamelessness and uncleanness.

concision. The word is not used elsewhere in Scripture. It signifies that the mere observance of the rite of circumcision, without a corresponding faith and inward obedience, was no better than an act of physical mutilation (cf. Gal. v. 12 and note).

circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the
4 flesh: though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence
5 in the flesh, I yet more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a
6 Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.
7 Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I

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iii. 4–6. *Paul's possibilities of carnal boasting in the light of legalism.*

4. In this passage Paul emphasizes what he has sacrificed. He knows the price he paid. He had all the things those men count valuable in a pre-eminent degree. The words are stronger than the translation shews, 'I myself *having confidence.*' He puts himself back in thought to the days before his conversion (cf. Gal. ii. 15).

5. circumcised the eighth day: in accordance with the original covenant (Gen. xvii. 12), while an Ishmaelite was circumcised in his thirteenth year (Gen. xvii. 25).

of the stock of Israel: the premier tribe, the God-given name (Gen. xxxii. 28) of whose founder had become the name of the nation.

of the tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin was the son of Jacob's favourite wife; and from this tribe arose the first king, whose royal name Paul himself had borne. This tribe led the vanguard of the army, and inspired the battle-cry, 'After thee, Benjamin' (see Judges v. 14).

a Hebrew of Hebrews: a man of unmixed stock. He had been brought up speaking the sacred tongue.

6. blameless: i. e. according to human standards.

iii. 7–14. *All fades save Christ, and life in Christ is the one great goal.*

All things formerly prized sink into insignificance alongside Christ, to be found in whom, and to be indued with his righteousness is the one worthy end in life. Paul will strive through fellowship with his death to attain a share in his resurrection. Such a life is one continual race in which he is upheld by the hand of him whose side he is seeking to attain.

7. gain: rather 'gains,' as in the margin, reckoning the individual items in the above list. This also emphasizes the contrast of the word 'loss.'

counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all 8
things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of
Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of
all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain
Christ, and be found in him, not having a righteousness 9
of mine own, *even* that which is of the law, but that
which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which
is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the 10
power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his
sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death; if by 11
any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the
dead. Not that I have already obtained, or am already 12
made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may
apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by

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8. dung. The word has either this meaning, or designates 'leavings of the table.' In any case 'refuse,' as the margin reads, covers the idea.

9. in him: cf. the frequent usage of 'in Christ' in Ephesians. If there could be such a thing as a righteousness springing from legal obedience he discards it.

by faith: rather, 'resting upon faith.'

10. the power of his resurrection: as an inward experience (cf. Col. iii. 1-4; Eph. ii. 5, 6), as is also 'the fellowship of his sufferings' (cf. Col. i. 24).

becoming conformed unto his death. The phrase indicates a process. For the thought cf. 1 Cor. xv. 31; 2 Cor. iv. 10.

11. resurrection. The word used is an unusual compound of the ordinary one, but no special shade of meaning can be attached to it.

12. Fully expressed the words would read, 'I say not that I have already obtained.' Many answers have been given to the question, 'What is it that he has not obtained?' The most satisfactory reply is, 'All that the preceding verses describe,' which is more clearly stated in the words, 'or am already made perfect.'

I press on: *lit.* 'pursue,' so that the A. V. 'follow after' is better than the R. V.

apprehend. The reading of the American Revisers, 'lay hold on . . . laid hold on,' is better, as it escapes the ambiguity of the word 'apprehend.'

I was apprehended refers to his conversion. The tense of the original marks a definite and single act.

13 Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended: but one thing *I do*, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things
14 which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the
15 prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and

The rendering of the margin, 'if so be that I may apprehend, seeing that also I was apprehended,' is the interpretation of many, while some prefer 'wherefore' instead of 'seeing that.'

13. yet. The MS. evidence for the omission of 'yet' is very strong.

stretching forward is a graphic word from the foot-race (cf. our modern sporting phrase 'the home-stretch'). The attitude is well represented in a familiar Greek statue of the racer. Bengel puts the idea well: 'The eye outstrips and draws onward the hand, and the hand the foot.'

14. goal. The word in the original is not the technical one for the 'goal,' but means a 'mark'—that on which the eye is bent.

prize. The verb formed from the word in the original is found in Col. ii. 18, iii. 15, where see notes.

high calling: rather, 'upward.' It marks the continual upward movement of the Christian life—the future to which God is ever summoning. With reference to this Divine voice the words of Tennyson might well be used:—

'He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevailed,
Shall find the toppling crags of duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun[1].'

iii. 15—iv. 1. *The conduct of citizens of the heavenly city.* The spirit just described is that which should mark all Christians, and wherever uncertainty exists God will make the way clear. Some shame their profession, but have no real part in its privileges. Heaven is the true disciple's home—his heart is set on the presence of its Lord, whose glory he will share, therefore steadfastness is the hall-mark of the kingdom.

15. perfect. In verse 12 the Apostle had spoken of himself as 'not yet made perfect.' The word seems to convey the idea of those who are sincerely seeking the Christian perfection their Lord enjoined (Matt. v. 48), accepting that as their goal. Some understand it as 'advanced in Christian experience.' It is used in

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[1] *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.*

if in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall
God reveal unto you: only, whereunto we have already 16
attained, by that same *rule* let us walk.

Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark 17
them which so walk even as ye have us for an ensample.
For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell 18
you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross
of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose god is the 19
belly, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who mind
earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven; from 20
whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus
Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humilia- 21

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the sense of 'mature' in 1 Cor. ii. 6, and of absolute perfection of nature in Matt. v. 48.

Here we have another beautiful instance of Paul's perfect courtesy, as well as humility, in associating himself with those to whom he is writing in this exhortation.

ye are otherwise minded. This covers a very wide possibility of difference, ignorance, or uncertainty in any matter of thought or conduct.

16. Conduct must keep pace with knowledge.

18. many. We do not know whom. Most understand the reference to be to nominal Christians of immoral life, some to Judaizers, and one or two of the latest commentators to the heathen, since they consider the Philippian church too pure to have such blots on its fellowship.

often: either by word of mouth or in former letters (see verse 1 and note).

19. whose god is the belly: Epicures, who 'lived to eat' (cf. Rom. xvi. 18; 2 Pet. ii. 13).

20. citizenship is in heaven actually as well as ideally.

a Saviour: rather, '*as* Saviour.'

21. fashion anew. The fashion is to be different, but the identity is to remain. Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 35–38.

body of humiliation. A phrase descriptive of its present weakness and imperfection, but not contemptuous, as in the erroneous translation of the A. V. Cf. T. H. Gill:—

> 'O mighty grace, our life to live
> To make our earth divine!
> O mighty grace, thy heavens to give,
> And lift our life to Thine.'

tion, *that it may be* conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.

4 Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.

2 I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the
3 same mind in the Lord. Yea, I beseech thee also, true
yokefellow, help these women, for they laboured with
me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my
fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: again I will say, Rejoice.
5 Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The
6 Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in every-

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to subject all things: cf. Eph. i. 22.

iv. **1. wherefore:** in view of all that has been stated in chap. iii.

longed for. Another pathetic word in which we may catch the passion of grief caused by separation.

iv. 2, 3. *Counsels of reconciliation.*

Euodia and Syntyche are both fairly common names of women. Acts xvii. 4–12 shew how the women of Macedonia received the gospel.

3. true yokefellow. Many attempts have been made to identify this person. Lightfoot supposes it to be Epaphroditus; but if he was the bearer of the letter it was most unlikely to address him thus in it, and still more so, if he was not to follow till later. Other names suggested are purely conjectural. Some would understand it of Paul's wife, and Renan of Lydia, but the adjective is masculine. The best suggestion seems to be that which reads the Greek word rendered 'yokefellow' as a proper name, translating, 'I beseech thee also, Synzygus, who art rightly so named.' Such descriptive or punning names were common, e. g. Onesimus (profitable), Onesiphorus (help-bearer), Chrestus (excellent).

laboured: cf. i. 27. The word implies share in risk and suffering.

book of life. Elsewhere the phrase occurs in the N. T. only in the Book of Revelation, where it is frequent. Its origin is in the language of the O. T.; cf. Exod. xxxii. 32, 33; see also Luke x. 20.

iv. 4–9. *Various exhortations and benedictions.*

6. For similar exhortations see Eph. vi. 18, v. 20, and Col. i. 3.

thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the 7
peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatso- 8
ever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.
The things which ye both learned and received and 9
heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

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7. peace of God: cf. Col. iii. 15, though this phrase only occurs here in N. T.

which passeth is rather 'surpasseth every thought,' the contrast apparently being between the conflicting turmoil of human reasoning and the quiet atmosphere of trust in the Divine guidance. This seems a much more satisfactory interpretation than the ordinary one, which sees in the words a mere statement that the peace of God is something the human mind cannot grasp. This would not be helpful, while the other is eminently practical and in conformity with the context.

shall guard. The metaphor is military. Vincent quotes appropriately Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, stanza cxxvi :—

'Love is and was my king and lord,
And will be, though as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and sleep
Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from place to place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.'

8. honourable: better 'reverend' of the margin—the things that inspire reverence. Matthew Arnold's rendering 'nobly serious' is good.

pure in the widest possible relation.

of good report: *lit.* 'fair-sounding'—things that are essentially worthy.

think on: rather, 'carefully estimate the value of.'

10 But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did
11 indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in
12 whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and
13 to be in want. I can do all things in him that strength-
14 eneth me. Howbeit ye did well, that ye had fellowship
15 with my affliction. And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving, but ye

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iv. 10-20. *Praise of generosity. Prayer for reward. Benediction.* Praise of the Philippians' generosity. Statement of his own self-sufficiency in Christ. Prayer for their being recompensed of God, and benediction.

10. ye have revived. The image contained in the original word is that of a tree putting forth fresh shoots in spring.

11. in respect of want. Lightfoot's paraphrase is good, 'in language dictated by want.'

in whatsoever state is better rendered 'in all the circumstances of the present state.'

content: 'self-sufficing.' A favourite word in the Stoic philosophy. Paul's self-sufficiency has a source outside himself.

12. to abound: i. e. 'to have abundance,' not 'to have too much.'

14. Again his courtesy is evident, lest by speaking of his self-sufficiency he should seem to despise their gifts.

well: better, 'ye did nobly.' The deed was not only generous but lovely.

had fellowship with: 'went shares with' (Lightfoot); cf. Gal. vi. 6. This was the old sense of 'communicate' (A. V.), and Vincent quotes Ben Jonson, 'thousands that communicate our loss.'

15. in the matter of: 'as to an account of.' The metaphor is a mercantile one. They had 'opened an account' of generosity with him, of which their giving is the 'credit' and his receiving the 'debt' side respectively. See below, verse 17.

only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again 16
unto my need. Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek 17
for the fruit that increaseth to your account. But I have 18
all things, and abound: I am filled, having received
from Epaphroditus the things *that came* from you, an
odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. And my God shall fulfil every need of 19
yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
Now unto our God and Father *be* the glory for ever and 20
ever. Amen.

Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren 21
which are with me salute you. All the saints salute 22
you, especially they that are of Cæsar's household.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. 23

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16. in Thessalonica: cf. Acts xvii. 1–9.

17. account: carrying on the idea of verse 15. Perhaps also 'fruit' may be understood as 'interest,' as the word is not uncommonly employed in that sense.

18. But. 'And' is a more suitable rendering of the connective here.

a sacrifice: i.e. 'the thing sacrificed.'

19. in glory is much better connected with the verb 'shall fulfil.' 'My God shall gloriously fulfil every need.' The usage of the Greek is against the common rendering.

iv. 21–23. *Salutations and closing benediction.*

21. This may be a direction to the readers of the letter, probably the officials of the church (i. 1).

22. Cæsar's household includes all the dependants of the palace, whatever their rank. Some of these may be named in Rom. xvi; see notes there.

APPENDIX A

THE EPISTLE TO THE LAODICEANS.

A TRANSLATION.

PAUL, an Apostle, not of men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, to the brethren who are at Laodicea : Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God in every prayer of mine because ye are abiding steadfast in Him, and persevering in His works, looking for the promise in the day of judgement. Neither let the vain words of some deceive you, who introduce another teaching that they may turn you away from the truth of the Gospel which is preached by me. And now God will bring it to pass, that my affairs (or persons) [turn out to] the furthering of the Gospel, and are acting and producing the graciousness of works which belong to the safety of the eternal life[1]. And now are my bonds manifest, which I suffer in Christ; in which I am glad and rejoice. And this falls out to me unto eternal salvation, which is effected by your prayers and by the help of the Holy Spirit, whether through life or through death. For to me to live is [life] in Christ, and to die is gain. And He will bring that same thing to pass in you by His mercy, that ye may have the same love and be of one mind. Therefore, beloved, as ye have heard in my presence, so hold fast and do in the love of God, and you will have life for ever, for it is God who worketh in you. And do without hesitation whatever ye do. And finally, beloved, rejoice in Christ and beware of those who are greedy of gain. Let all your prayers be open before God, and be ye constant in the mind of Christ. And whatsoever is noble, and true, and chaste, and upright, and lovely do. And what you have heard and received, hold in your heart, and you shall have peace. The saints salute you. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with your spirit. And see that the

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[1] This sentence is very obscure, and Lightfoot supposes some words have been omitted, and that the latter part of the sentence belongs to another, the beginning of which has been lost.

Colossians' letter be read to you [and this letter also to the Colossians].

The Latin text of the above Epistle exists in a large number of MSS. There is considerable variation in the text, and also in the position of the letter. It is most frequently found immediately after Colossians, but sometimes after Hebrews, and not uncommonly quite at the end of the New Testament; occasionally it is found in other places.

Lightfoot argues that there must have been a Greek original, both from the peculiar construction of the Latin, and also from the fact that the quotations of which it is so full were not made from existing Latin texts of Paul's Epistles. Besides, such a letter was known to Greek writers, and its title appears in the list of New Testament books given in the *Muratorian Fragment* (about 170 A.D.). It seems to have been very early and very generally regarded as a forgery, though, as Lightfoot says, it is difficult to assign a reason, except the wish to supply the letter mentioned in Col. iv. 16. It has no doctrinal peculiarities to uphold nor heretical opinions to proclaim. 'Thus,' he concludes, 'it is quite harmless, so far as falsity and stupidity combined can ever be regarded as harmless.'

APPENDIX B

THE RELATION OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS TO OTHER NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS.

A. The Epistle to the Colossians.

B. The Fourth Gospel.

A. *The Epistle to the Colossians.*

The most superficial reading of the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians reveals a strong resemblance between the letters. Indeed, this feature of similarity of contents and language may appear to many the most striking one in the comparison. Yet a more careful examination will shew that the differences are no less remarkable and noteworthy than the instances of verbal and all but verbal coincidence. The clearest way in which to illustrate these statements is to read a few of the more striking parallels side by side. Let us take the following:—

Eph. i. 1, 2.	Col. i. 1, 2.
Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.	Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *which are* at Colossæ; Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

These are almost identical, save that Timothy is associated in the greeting to Colossæ, as is natural, if the view that the Ephesian Letter was a circular one is correct, for Paul would not be then so likely to associate the name of one of his companions, thus giving a directly personal note to a letter that was designed to bear a more general character. It may be dangerous to assign a reason for the inclusion of 'the Lord Jesus Christ' in the one case, and not in the other, but there may have been a distinct purpose in emphasizing the unity and majesty of the Father to a people who were ready to confuse the nature of the Godhead, and by their theories to lessen, while they thought they were increasing, His glory. Again :—

Eph. iv. 20–24.	Col. iii. 9, 10.
But ye did not so learn Christ; if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, which waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit; and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.	Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him.
Eph. v. 3–8.	Col. iii. 5–8.
But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord.	Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, the which is idolatry; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience; in the which ye also walked aforetime, when ye lived in these things. But now put ye also away all these; anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth.

In this instance also the Ephesian form is the longer and more elaborate, as would be natural in a letter addressed to a much larger number, and also to those who were to receive as well the shorter letter. It is interesting to notice how the one often serves as an explanatory commentary upon the other, e.g. in Colossians we read, 'after the image of Him that created him.' Could there be any question as to who that Creator was? The form in Ephesians leaves no uncertainty, and adds a statement of the spiritual nature of the new manhood, 'which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.' In the case of the moral evils denounced, it would seem as if, for once, the Apostle saw greater danger of false teaching affecting those to whom the General Epistle is sent than those to whom the particular one is directed, for in Ephesians we have the words introduced, 'Let no man deceive you with empty words.' We know, however, that forms of teaching, which led to immoral practices, were prevalent throughout the whole district, so that this warning is generally applicable, and does not invalidate the contention that, on the whole, the Colossian Epistle is the more controversial of the two. Again :—

Eph. v. 18–21.	Col. iii. 16, 17.
And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.	Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Here the connexion is different in each case. In the one, the thought of the evil excitement, associated with the festivals of heathenism, is contrasted with the spiritual joys of the new faith, while in the other the educative value of sacred song, as serving to store the mind with Divine truth, is the reason alleged for its practice. Again :—

Eph. v. 22, vi. 1-9.	Col. iii. 18—iv. 1.
Wives, *be in subjection* unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. . . . . Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother	Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the

EPH. v. 22, vi. 1-9 (*cont.*).	COL. iii. 18—iv. 1 (*cont.*).
(which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not in the way of eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men: knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening: knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.	Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged. Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ. For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Here the most striking feature is the absence in Colossians of the long and celebrated passage on Marriage, as a parable of the relation in which Christ stands to his church, that intervenes between the verse common to the two Epistles and the injunctions to the children in that to the Ephesians. Again the reason of its omission may have been that both letters were to be heard by the Colossian and Laodicean churches, and that it was not requisite to repeat such a striking passage, but it must be confessed this is not a convincing argument. There does seem a probable explanation in the difference of expression. In the one case, wifely subjection is urged as being 'unto the Lord'; in the other, it is stated to be 'as is fitting in the Lord.' The former striking phrase required explanation. It was necessary to make clear in what sense subjection to a husband could be regarded as obedience to Christ; and the whole of the theory of marriage thus implied had to be set forth. The parallel is very close in the remaining injunctions, though, as is customary, more extended in the Ephesian Epistle.

The last parallel that I shall now adduce is, in some ways, the most instructive of all, because the differences are more marked than the resemblances:—

Eph. i. 15–23.	Col. i. 3–5, 9–18.
For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and which *ye shew* toward all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention *of you* in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.	We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have toward all the saints. . . . . For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray and make request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether

Col. i. 3-5, 9-18 (*cont.*).

thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

The main purpose of the prayer in the Ephesian Epistle is for spiritual illumination, while in the other it is for growth in holiness of life. In the Colossian passage, the nature and authority of Christ are enlarged upon and elaborated, evidently with a controversial purpose, as correcting current error.

These examples may suffice, but a careful and minute study of the two books, verse by verse, will reveal much more of a similar nature. The carefully prepared references of the Revisers are of immense service in such an investigation.

Now the problem emerges, How are we to account for such considerable and continuous parallels in two Epistles, side by side, within the New Testament—

'Not like to like, but like in difference'?

The most obvious reply is that one is a copy of the other. In some form or other this theory has been maintained by many, either that Ephesians is extended from Colossians, or that Colossians is a *précis* form of Ephesians. Most ingenious is the idea of one scholar, that Ephesians was elaborated from an earlier form of Colossians than the one we now possess, while the extant Colossians was in turn derived from the two former[1]. This partakes too much of the Chinese puzzle form of criticism to commend itself to the mind of many students of the subject. All this class of explanations takes for granted that one, at least, of the Epistles is not from Paul's hand. The more direct and personal character of Colossians would favour its genuineness, but then the passages that would thus fall to the imitator, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, are so lofty, deep, and subtle, as to bear the mark of Paul's finest work. Were Colossians the work of the later hand, it is scarcely conceivable that several of the omissions therein noted, in the above parallels, would have been made.

If we are correct in our contention, that both letters are from

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[1] Holtzmann.

Paul's own hand, then the explanation is not difficult. The thoughts common to both were in his mind at one time. In the longer and more elaborate Epistle, he sets these ideas forth in the fullness of their form, as a definite body of teaching on the great intellectual problems that were disturbing the minds of many of the Christians of Asia. He puts them there in their positive and universal aspect. In the shorter letter he has in view certain definite errors which he wishes to combat, and with the necessary correctives to which he desires to supply his converts. This special form of error Lightfoot[1] has shewn consisted in a Judaic Gnosticism, which combined ascetic practices (see Col. ii. 16–23) with a speculative philosophy, which made light of the doctrine of the resurrection (see Col. ii. 8–15), proclaimed an elaborate hierarchy of angelic beings (see Col. i. 15, 18), and maintained an attitude of intellectual exclusiveness (see Col. i. 26–29). By their doctrine of Angels their teaching on Creation was also affected, and therefore it is that the Apostle makes so clear the place of Christ in the cosmic order (Col. i. 16, 17). In the Ephesian Letter, on the other hand, it is Christ's relation to the church that is the chief subject of instruction.

We conclude, therefore, that the peculiarly intimate connexion of these two Epistles is to be explained by the fact that they were written in close succession, that they dealt with the problems then exercising the Apostle's mind, owing to the reports that had reached him from the churches in Asia Minor, and that this information determined the special character of the teaching. In the case of the Colossian Letter he is setting himself to correct certain definite errors, and to meet the circumstances of an individual church. The longer letter contains the general principles which, in the shorter one, find particular application to local needs.

B. *The Fourth Gospel.*

It will have been remarked that in the notes fairly frequent reference has been made to the Gospel of John, and that with one chapter in particular, the seventeenth, numerous close parallels have been given (see p. 86). The Logos- (the 'Word-') doctrine, with which every reader of the opening verses of John's Gospel is familiar, is implied in the tenth verse of the first chapter of Ephesians. The use of the words 'love,' 'light,' 'sanctification,' and similar terms, are alike in both writings. 'The contrast,' to quote Abbott, 'between the light which Christ brings and the opposing power of darkness is expressed in both with striking similarity.' (Cf. Eph. v. 8, 'walk as children of light'; verse 11, 'have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them'; verse 13, 'But all things when they are reproved are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light,' with John xii. 35, 'Walk while ye have the light'; iii. 20, 21, 'For every one that doeth ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved.') It is somewhat remarkable that the most striking parallels are found in three chapters of the gospel, viz. the first, third, and seventeenth. Two of these, at least, contain the reflections and speculations of the writer of the gospel, and we cannot but think that the form, at all events, however much more, of the great intercessory prayer is due to the same source. The interest of the comparison deepens when we realize its significance. The Ephesian Letter was circulated in the churches of Asia Minor, and it is all but certain that Ephesus itself would possess a copy. Whether we are of opinion that John the Apostle, or a later John, is the author of the Fourth Gospel, it emanated from the same district. Their writer was almost certainly a student of this great doctrinal Epistle of Paul. Its teaching found in him a ready disciple. Their minds were akin, and he became steeped in its thoughts and language. When he began to write on similar themes, it is not surprising to find him using the phraseology of his great master. It would seem that Paul, in Ephesians and Colossians, had played a larger part in the creation of the Logos-doctrine of the Christian church than he is often supposed to have done, and that he who made it so famous in the opening sentences of his gospel had found one source, at least, in these Epistles. In Professor Percy Gardner's[1] latest volume he takes this point of view, and in relation to it says: 'Although the Logos-doctrine appears first in fully developed form in the Fourth Gospel, yet in earlier writings we may find approximations to it. Paul in this, as in many matters, prepared the way for the Evangelist. In Rom. x. 6 he writes, "The righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:) or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart." Here, although the noun rendered "word" is *rēma* and not *logos*, yet Paul seems within a step of speaking of Christ as the Word of God. And the step which Paul does not take is actually taken by the writer of the Apocalypse, when he speaks of the rider on the white horse, who is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and whose name is the Word of God.' It will not be the least of the great services of this Epistle to the church of Christ, if it be discovered that it served as one of the sources of inspiration of that immortal work which the church knows as the *Gospel of St. John.*

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[1] *Commentary on Colossians,* pp. 71–111.

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[1] Percy Gardner, *A Historic View of the New Testament*, p. 197; see whole of Lecture VI.

INDEX

[*The Numerals refer to the Pages.*]

Abbott, 80, 83, 86, 90, 99, 103, 107, 112, 126, 134, 135, 139, 142, 146, 187.
Acts of the Apostles, 35.
Adoption, 80.
Alexander the Great, 33.
Alford, 129.
American Revisers, 142, 145, 161.
Angels, 92.
Antiochus II, 13.
Apamea, 11.
Apocalypse, 13, 188.
Apocrypha, 127, 133.
Apollo, 5, 14.
Apphia, 29.
Aquila and Priscilla, 14.
Archippus, 29, 151.
Aristarchus, 149.
Aristotle, 5, 86, 114, 117.
Arnold, Matthew, 175.
Artemis, 14.
Ascetic, 25.
Asia, 11.
Assyrian clay tablets, 3.
Athletics (*see* Metaphors).
Augustine, 97, 118.

Barnabas, Epistle of, 7.
Baur, 24.
'Beloved'—a name of Christ, 81.
Bengel, 107, 156, 172.
Bennet and Adeney, vii.
Bernard, 23.
Beyschlag, vi.
Bigg, 85.
'Bishops,' 157.
Blackie, J. S., 108.
'Boldness,' 162.
British Museum, 4, 15.
Browning, 26, 164, 166.
Bunyan, 23, 97, 126.
Butler, 89.

Cæsarea, 8.
Calvin, 101.
'Captivity, Epistles of the,' 7, 9.
Cerinthus, 26.
Chiasm, 153.
'Children and Parents,' 122.
Christ the one Mediator, 25.
Chrysostom, 82, 91, 119.
Church, 120, 135.
Cicero, 5, 94.
Circular letter, 18, 95.
Circumcision, 91, 140, 170.
Clement of Rome, 7.
'Codex Bezæ,' 116, 136.
Coleridge, 22.
Colony, 163.
Colossæ, 12.
Colossians, Epistle to the, 20, 24, 181.
Commandments, Reference to, 123.
Corinthians, Epistles to the, 15.
Courtesy of Paul, 109, 147, 149, 156, 173.
Coverdale's version, 144.
'Covetousness,' 110, 114, 115.
Cowper, 139.
Crenides, 33.

Dante, 80, 86.
Deacons, 157.
Deissmann, 4, 6, 159, 165.
Demas, 150.
Devil, 112.
Dickson, 165.
Diognetus, Epistle to, 7.
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 5.
'Discernment,' 159.
Dispensation (*see* 'Stewardship').
Dods, vii.
Dyes, 12.

'Earnest,' 84.
Earthquakes, 12.
Egnatian Road, 35.
Election, Paul's doctrine of, 84.
Eliot, George, 147.
Ellicott, 132.
Emancipation of slaves, 31.
Enoch, Book of the Secrets of, 126.
Epaphras, 12, 14, 130, 131.
Epaphroditus, 168.
Ephesians, Epistle to the, 17, 83.
— authenticity of, 18, 186.
Ephesus, 11, 14.
Epictetus, 118.
Epistles, The, as literature, 3.
'Epistles of the Captivity,' 7, 9.
Epistles of Paul, lost, 151, 169.
Essenes, 25.
Euodia, 174.

Findlay, vi, 11.
'Foundation of apostles and prophets,' 93.
Fuller, 112.
'Fullness,' 87, 135, 140.

Gardner, Prof. Percy, 188.
Gibb, 9.
Gill, T. H., 173.
Gnostics, 94.
Greetings, 83.
Greyson Letters, 6.
Gwynn, 9.

Hamerton, 6.
Harnack, 10.
Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, 11, 19, 105, 116, 134.
Hebrews, Epistle to the, 6.
Herbert, George, 118.
Heuzey, 34.
Hierapolis, 13, 138.
Holtzmann, 20.
Horace, 5.
Hort, 19, 20, 21, 85.
'Husbands and wives,' 119.
Hymns, 116, 118.
Hypatia, Kingsley's, 169.

Ignatius, 7, 160, 167.
Imprisonment of Paul, 8.
'In Christ,' 21, 86, 95.
Irenæus, 26.

James, Epistle of, 6.
John, 13, 16.
John, Gospel of, 20, 86.
— 1 Epistle of, 6.
Johannine elements in Paul, 20, 187.
Jonson, Ben, 176.
Judaism, 91, 140, 170.
Jülicher, 10.
Julius Cæsar, 34.
Justus, 149.
Juvenal, 8.

Kant, 85.
Kay, 105.
Kenosis, 165.

Laodicea, 12, 13, 150.
Laodiceans, Epistle to the, 150, 179.
'Learn Christ,' 110.
Letters of ancient world, 3.

Lightfoot, 7, 26, 27, 78, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 92, 133, 134, 142, 143, 146, 151, 153, 162, 165, 166, 176, 180.
Lincoln, Abraham, 31.
Litotes, 110.
Lock, 20, 105.
Lowell, 31.
Luke, 9, 143, 150, 168.
Luther, 31, 101.
Lycus, Valley of the, 11.

McClymont, vi.
Macedonia, 33, 38.
— the man of, 35.
Mæander, 11.
Mark, 16, 149.
Marriage, 19.
Max Müller, 146.
Menander, 103.
Metaphors, 108, 111, 148, 169, 172.
'Middle wall of partition,' 92.
Miletus, 11.
Milton, 86.
Moffatt, vi.
Moule, 120.
Muratorian Fragment, 180.
Myers', F. W. H., *St. Paul*, vii, 136, 137, 138, 162.
'Mystery,' 88.

Names common in Philippi, 34, 178.
Nature, Love of, 36.
Neapolis, 35.
Nymphas, 150.

Old English words, 162, 176.
Onesimus, 30, 128, 147, 156.
Optimism of Paul, 161.
Ovid, 5.

Paget, 127.
Paley, 82.
'Panoply,' 125.
Papyri, Greek, 4.
Parabolani, 169.
'Partition, Wall of,' 92.
Paul's language, 6, 87, 92, 154.
— eye for nature, 36.
Peake, vii.
'Perfecting,' 107.
Peter, 1 Epistle of, 20, 85.
— 2 Epistle of, 5.
Philemon, 29.
Philemon, Epistle to, 28.
Philip the Apostle, 13.
Philip of Macedon, 33.
Philippi, 33.
Philippians, Epistle to the, 9, 38.
— integrity of, 38.
Phillips, Stephen, 134.
Phrygia, 25.
Phrygian powder, 13.
Plato, 86, 100, 134.
Pleroma, 27, 87.
Pliny, 5, 28, 118.
Plutarch, 5, 112, 120.
Polycarp, 7.
Prætorium, 8, 40, 160.
Prætors, 34.
Presbyters, 158.
Priene, 11.
Priscilla (*see* Aquila).
Prudentius, 23.
'Psalm lxviii, the Christians', 105.
Pythagoreans, treatment of anger by, 112.

Quotation, formula of, 104, 116.

Rabbis, story of the, 91.
Ramsay, 8, 15, 35, 40, 117, 160.
Renan, 29, 35.
Reuss, 7.
Revelation, Book of the, 13.
Réville, 157.

'Riches,' 82.
Roads, Roman, 11, 35.
Rome, 8.

Sabatier, 31.
Sacrifice in Paul's writings, Metaphor of, 167.
Salutations, 130.
Scott, C. Anderson, 6.
Scythian, 146.
Seneca, 5.
'Servants and masters,' 123, 156.
Seven Churches of Asia, 13.
Shakespeare, 34, 89, 138.
Sidney, Sir Philip, 154.
Slaves and Christianity, 31.
Stalker, vi.
'Stature,' 108.
Stevens, vi.
Stewardship, 82, 98, 137.
Stowe, Mrs. Beecher, 31.
Syntyche, 174.
Synzygus, 174.

Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, 158.
Temple at Ephesus, 14.
Tennyson, 6, 85, 99, 121, 122, 135, 139, 172, 175.
Tertullian, 17.
Theodoret, 97.
Thucydides, 127.
Timothy, 9, 12, 130, 157.
Trench, 118.
Trial before Nero, Paul's, 40.
Trophimus, 92.
'Tulliver, Maggie,' 147.
Twentieth Century New Testament, vi.
Tychicus, 128.
Tyrannus, school of, 15, 26.

Via Egnatia, 35.
Vincent, 155, 163, 175.
Virgil, 115.
Von Soden, 22, 121, 128.
Vulgate, 122.

Wesley, Charles, 125.
Westcott and Hort, 85.
Wisdom, Book of, 127, 133.
'Workmanship,' 90.
Wycliffe's version, 138.

[For Contents of the Epistles see pp. 23, 27, 32, 41.]

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